00107707

GOD
355
Ros I Rep
107707

Digitized with financial assistance from
Shri Brihad Bhartiya Samaj
on 31 October, 2019

Representative Government and War

107707

By

CAPTAIN CHARLES ROSS, D.S.O., *p.s.c.*

The Norfolk Regiment

LX-K-23

GOD
355
Ros/Rep
101:107

London

Hutchinson & Co.

Paternoster Row

1903

The Author wishes to express his gratitude to his brother, Professor Ronald Ross, C.B., F.R.S., for his assistance in correcting the proofs of this work; as well as to those friends for whose help he is indebted.

PART I

WARFARE

CHAPTER I

WAR AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

PAGE

Methods of conducting War—The Life of a Nation 3

CHAPTER II

PEACE STRATEGY AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

The Three Branches of the Conduct of War—The Illustration afforded by Prussia 22

CHAPTER III

PREPARATION FOR WAR AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

The Illustration afforded by Prussia—The Illustration afforded by France—The Illustration afforded by the Boer War—The Illustration afforded by China and Japan 49

CHAPTER IV

WAR STRATEGY AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Date of the Declaration of War—the Subordination of Strategical to Political Considerations—The Illustration afforded by the Boer War—The Illustration afforded by the War of Secession in America 73

PART II

THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT AND WAR

CHAPTER V

THE LEADERSHIP OF A NATION

PAGE

The different Forms of Government—The new Form of Government 99

CHAPTER VI

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT AND PEACE STRATEGY

Great Britain in South Africa—Great Britain in Europe—Great Britain on the Frontier of India 110

CHAPTER VII

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT AND PREPARATION FOR WAR

Secrecy in Preparation—Military Organisation and Training . 137

CHAPTER VIII

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT AND THE CONDUCT OF WAR

The Illustration afforded by the Franco-German War—The Illustration afforded by the Boer War—The Illustration afforded by the War of Secession in America 149

CHAPTER IX

ADAPTABILITY OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT FOR WAR PURPOSES

PAGE

Martial and Civil Law in the Boer War—The System of Leadership in the Boer War—The Inherent Weakness of Representative Government for War Purposes 180

PART III

GREAT BRITAIN AND WAR

CHAPTER X

THE OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE

Historical Retrospect—The Illustration afforded by Rome and Carthage 225

CHAPTER XI

THE MILITARY INSTITUTIONS

The British Army Machine—The British Navy Machine . . 260

CHAPTER XII

THE BRITISH FORM OF GOVERNMENT

A Council of War—Civilian Control of the Armed Forces—The Illustration afforded by the Boer War—The British Constitution and the War of the Future 293

PART IV

THE BRITISH EMPIRE AND TRAINED POWERS

CHAPTER XIII

PAGE

THE HEART OF A NATION 327

CHAPTER XIV

GERMANY AND THE EMPIRE 336

CHAPTER XV

THE PROBLEM OF THE EMPIRE—AN EMPIRE SYSTEM . . 355

PART I

WARFARE

CHAPTER I

WAR AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Methods of conducting War—The Life of a Nation.

AS portions of the world become overcrowded, so it would seem must war, pestilence, or famine occur.

War is the struggle for existence between races, between nations, between man and man, and between animals. Two nations urgently desirous of the same thing on which existence depends enter into competition with each other. Compromise may follow compromise, but the end will be the same—war.

War is the great crisis in the life of a nation, which decides whether that nation shall continue to exist. It is a struggle for existence, in which one nation strikes to kill another nation.

The destruction of a race of savages by a great nation is not war; it is due to the irresistible impetus of the wave of civilisation, which, momentarily checked by some petty obstacle, yet sweeps onward. It is play to the great nation; it is effacement to the savage—as it were, a full-grown man tramples

down a child in his path. Military operations against savages are wrongly termed war, and give a false impression of the thing. When two nations nearly equal in resources meet in battle, it is war. It is, as it were, two full-grown men engaged in a death struggle.

War is a relapse into barbarism. It should be clearly understood that it is not a moral affair; it is, in fact, a crime. True, the motive is a national and not a personal one; but the motive, whatever it may be, never condones a crime. The slaughter of men in battle is murder committed in the interests of a nation instead of in those of an individual. The science of war teaches us how to commit this murder with impunity and despatch. There is no chivalry in war save that which forbears to spare; no morality save that which ends quickly. Serious errors are made by those who dare not face these melancholy facts.

* * * * *

The savage method of conducting war is simple in the extreme. The successful nation annihilates the unsuccessful.

Such were the wars between the Israelites and other tribes. The Jewish God, wisely recognising that, were the defeated enemy left to recuperate, the chosen people might be ultimately defeated in the years to come, directed that whole nations—men, women, children, cattle, and every living thing—should be destroyed.

The Zulus, to this day, recognise that the only safe method to adopt is to annihilate the enemy. "Why," they ask, "should we, being able, refrain from killing our enemies, when those enemies, being left alive, may ultimately kill us?"

"When I have my enemy in my power," said Bismarck, "I must destroy him."*

War, as conducted by the ancients, was short and sharp; men were killed; women were taken as slaves; the country was annexed. Civilisation, however, with its principles of humanity and love, has endeavoured to introduce these sentiments into war. It has built up what may be termed the laws of chivalry. These laws are the outcome of the chivalrous age, in which human nature, emerging from barbarism, rushed to the opposite extreme and abhorred everything brutal.

Thus in the knightly age battle became a matter of rules and regulations, and knights exercised considerable care in their methods of fighting their adversaries. Some slight lingering of common sense, however, by no means forbade, when the struggle was one of life and death, the actual killing of those enemies. These chivalrous traditions are still maintained among English schoolboys; they fight in strict accordance with rules until such time as one of the combatants gives the other "best man."

But war is not play; it is a case of "your life or

* "Either make a man your friend, or put it out of his power to be your enemy," writes Machiavelli.

mine." The Germans, being soldiers, recognised the truth of this principle; and in 1875 eagerly sought occasion for war with the French, whom they had neglected to kill in 1871. The Germans were not permitted by other nations to carry out their nefarious but strategically correct designs against the French; and, not having at that time attained to full strength, were forced to refrain.

Civilisation is the triumph of the principle of sentiment, taught by religion and centuries of education, over the savage instincts of the human animal.

But love and sentiment are out of place in the struggle for existence. There is no love or sentiment in the operations of two rival mercantile houses; there can be none, for the intrusion of such feelings into business is impracticable, and can only lead to failure. And so similarly, when love and sentiment find place in a nation's dealings with its rivals and in its struggle for existence, the result must, sooner or later, be defeat.

War is a return to nature; the veneer of civilisation is scratched, and the ferocity of the human being, the ferocity which has enabled it to triumph in the struggle for existence over the lesser animal world, is disclosed. In war it is the exercise of the sterner barbaric qualities which gains the day. Strength, activity, determination, decision, the power of hard thought engendered by stern necessity; these will bring success. The indecisions of love, the vapourings of sentiment, the sloth and lack of power

of thought engendered by a life of comfort and ease, will bring failure and defeat. Hence it is that in the wars of the world it is, comparatively speaking, the more barbarous and consequently the hardier nation which triumphs over the more civilised and the softer race.

That nation is, it would seem, over-civilised which, through the ease, comfort, and security of its existence, gives no thought to war, and to the necessity of exercising its thews and sinews. Such a nation quickly degenerates; for it is by war, and by the constant study of war, alone, that a nation can maintain itself in such condition as will enable it to combat and overcome its enemies. Without this stimulus the human race would quickly degenerate.

Is existence possible, indeed, without war? Everywhere there is war. War between the ivy and the tree; war throughout the animal world; war between individual men; war between companies of men; war between nations; warfare even in the very blood of man. Everywhere the struggle for existence. Nature arms all things, whether animal or vegetable with weapons of offence and defence. It would indeed seem to be a law of nature that nations, equally with men, with the beasts, and with the vegetable world, must struggle for existence.

The man who, through ease and opulence, has never struggled for existence, will breed children more worthless than himself; their goods will fall to those more vigorous than themselves; and the

family is fated to die out, unless, indeed, saved by the renovating action of adversity, or through the intermixture of more vigorous blood. And so with nations, however comfortable the existence of a nation, let it turn its main thoughts to war; aye, and let it regard every opportunity for re-invigorating itself by actual war as a blessing in disguise.

Is it ease and comfort that is desired? they follow in the train of success; but sloth follows in the train of ease and comfort, and sloth leads to defeat and death.

War is horrible, but it is cleaner than pestilence or famine.

Misplaced chivalry will increase, until the struggle for existence between nations gradually becomes more acute. Stern necessity will then force some great powerful nation to return to the old barbaric methods; and the world will stand aghast at the barbarism, but will yet fear to intervene. Atrocities are the last resource of strategy in its efforts to force an enemy to his knees. Nations commence war actuated by chivalrous sentiments; they buy all they take, and allow themselves to be cheated with impunity by the population of the country they invade. But if the struggle be protracted this chivalry quickly dies away. Houses and farms are destroyed as a penalty for breaking up of railway or telegraph lines; which is nevertheless a perfectly fair warlike operation. Might, however, has taken the place of right; and should the destruction of

house and farm prove insufficient, whole towns must be destroyed and the inhabitants must hang; but at all cost the subjugation of the enemy must be achieved,

It is but a small step from the destruction of towns and the hanging of inhabitants to the committal of atrocities. But this small step is the line of demarkation between civilisation and savagedom, the neutral territory across which civilisation may not stride. It is not, however, difficult to imagine that in some future war between nations the inexorable laws of existence may lead civilised humanity to the committal of atrocities in every way similar to those committed by barbarians.

On his march from Egypt into Syria in 1799 Napoleon stormed and captured Jaffa. One half the garrison were killed in defence of the place; one half, some two thousand, were captured. Napoleon could not take these prisoners with him; he could not send them back to his base; he could not liberate them; he therefore shot them in cold blood. Such an action is regarded by Englishmen untaught in war with abhorrence; not so, however, is it regarded by the soldiers of the Continent. Count Yorcke von Wartenburg, Colonel of the General Staff of the Prussian Army, in his "Napoleon as a General" writes as follows:—

"In the eyes of mere didactic historical writers, this deed may appear horrible and revolting, but practical military history will not consider

it as such. The safety of one's own army, on which the possibility depends of ultimately gaining the victory, must outweigh all other considerations. If such an act is necessary for the safety of one's army, it is not only justified, but its repetition in any future war would be advisable, and no convention could alter this fact. In the exceptional circumstances of warfare, no other motto is permissible but this, *Salus publica summa lex*; and any conclusions of conventions can, and is meant to be, binding only as far as the above principle allows. Cases will, indeed, occur in every war where the combatants are forced to violate the literal text of conventional laws for their own safety; and in such cases recriminations may indeed be defensible for political purposes, but are, for all that, untenable. Napoleon himself considered his action at Jaffa as quite natural, and spoke of it as such to his subordinate officers; it did not enter his head to discuss the necessity for his resolution. He wrote to Marmont: 'The capture of Jaffa has been a brilliant affair; four thousand of the best troops of Djezzar and the best gunners of Constantinople had to be put to the sword'; and to Kleber: 'The garrison of Jaffa consisted of nearly four thousand men, two thousand were killed in the town, and nearly two thousand were shot between yesterday and to-day.' We mentioned some time ago that Napoleon could not really be said to have been cruel, but he did possess the strength of mind to be hard and to look on men at certain times

as mere counters; and this strength of mind a general must possess." *

English history tells us that Henry V. of England dealt with his prisoners in a similar manner.

* * * * * *

War is stern necessity to the human race; and unless a nation can recognise this fact, it will be unready when the time comes. War is a great crisis in the life of a nation; and when that crisis occurs all thoughts other than that of gaining the victory at all costs must be discarded, or defeat will result. Defeat in a so-called war, an episode of a great struggle for existence, may appear at the time to be a matter of but small concern, and one easily remedied. It is not so, however; defeat is but the stepping-stone to heavier disaster. Thus, the defeat of the British in the Boer War of 1881 was, at the time, considered of but small moment, and not a matter which could in the slightest degree affect the Empire. Yet this reverse to British arms led to the Boer War of 1899, when the most strenuous exertions on the part of the whole Empire were necessary to avert defeat and to save the Empire.

A nation, like a man prepared to fight for his life, must keep itself in training, and be in readiness to strip at a moment's notice in order to strike the first decisive blow. Thoughts of war must be paramount in peace-time. All interests must be discarded which are likely to endanger national success in war. A

* "Napoleon as a General," vol. i., p. 145.

nation must refrain from chivalry in its dealings with other nations; and strategical requirements must be paramount even in peace-time. And when a nation strikes, let it strike with all its might, with the whole manhood of the country, and with the whole thought of the nation concentrated on the determination to win; and let it strike and strike again until its adversary receives its death-blow.

There can be neither compromise nor sentiment, if success would be gained in the struggle for existence.

War is terrible. It fills men's minds with cunning, and leads nations into despicable and tortuous paths. Yet without it how shall the human race exist? It hardens and develops a nation's muscles; it develops the brains of a nation, as the struggle for existence develops man's brains. It fills men's minds with noble ambitions; it indirectly gives propulsion to commerce, to the arts, to the sciences; it raises nations from their sloth; without it a nation sinks to insignificance and nothingness, and war comes again and wipes it from the face of the earth.

* * * * * *

It might at first glance appear that efforts to probe into futurity must always partake of the nature of speculation. But history teaches, by numerous examples, that, given certain causes in being in the life of a nation, certain effects will automatically result; and, if based upon a correct appreciation of the lessons of history, these forecasts are removed

from the realms of mere speculation, and become of value to a nation as warnings that a certain course of action, if persisted in, must inevitably lead to certain disastrous results.

A nation, even as a man, would seem to enjoy a certain lease of vigorous life. That life may be long or short; it may be destroyed in youth, maturity, or age. A nation is born, but never born great. If not struck down from internal or external causes, it will, in the course of nature, grow, attain maturity, then old age, then senility; and, lastly, if history speaks true, it will ultimately to all intents and purposes die, or at the least will become powerless for good or evil, will sink into oblivion, it may be but temporary, its life possibly renewed in its children, leaving its impress, whether good or bad, whether great or small, writ on the face of the earth, a pastime or a study for the scientist, a paragraph or a page in history. Of such were the Egyptians, the Persians, the Grecians, the Carthaginians, the Romans; and of such in more modern times are the Turkish and Spanish Empires.

Nations are potential robbers; there is no law or police force to prevent robbery; fear of the intended victim or of other nations will alone deter. The people of a nation earnestly desire wealth and prosperity, which conduce to the happiness of the lower orders and to the peace and comfort of the nation; for without wealth and prosperity the people must exist in a condition of misery; and the nation,

afflicted with constant internecine struggles, must fail in the struggle for existence and die. It is thus that a youthful and poor nation with but little to lose will face war with a powerful but rich adversary rather than a continuance of its present apparently unending misery. Competition for wealth between nations is a law of nature even as it is between men. The stronger wins, the weaker loses. A young nation may spring to wealth and comfort and a great name at a single bound by wresting riches from the hands of an inept race—why should it refrain?

The youth of a nation is strenuous, marked by vigour, decision, sudden, rapid, and decisive action, with a definite national object in view; for it is by the display of these qualities alone that it may hope to fight its way through the vicissitudes of the struggle for existence. In youth this national struggle is apparent to all the men of the nation, for the threat conveyed by powerful neighbours is clearly in evidence. To such a nation internal or domestic questions are of but small importance compared to the security of the whole; for when a nation is ungrown and unknown, defeat in war entails annexation, partial slavery, absorption in the race of the conqueror, and extinction.

But, as time goes on, this stripling nation, but barely holding its own, browbeaten on all sides, yet hardened in the bitter school of adversity and poverty, constantly forcing its way to the front by sheer pluck

and determination, attains the maturity of manhood, self-contained, strong, resourceful, not over-scrupulous; recognised as leader by smaller neighbours allied in blood; watching opportunities; extending its domination, whether by force or cajolery; striking, if necessary, suddenly and heavily; determined to succeed. And thus to war against, and victory over, its principal rival; and so on to Empire and greatness; and then to prosperity and riches, focussing the wealth and commerce of the neighbouring world in its own hands; comfort, the accumulation of riches, the growth of power; dominating all by the sheer force of its enormous resources and prestige, it attains its zenith as the Empire of the day.

But with great riches and power arise conflicting interests, with the inevitable political contests. Wealth breeds the desire for increased wealth, comfort for increased comfort. Assured of the national security of the whole, the eyes of the nation are turned inwards to the constant study of domestic problems; the strife of political parties grows in bitterness and vehemence, absorbing the full attention of the people as of the leaders; and the nation, as it ages, habitually neglecting the study of the means by which it achieved greatness, sinks gradually into forgetfulness of the outside world, and is content to regard itself, with its vast resources and prestige, as unassailable. But long-continued prosperity engenders sloth and obesity; while national virility decays through lack of national exertion. And these facts

become apparent to the outside world of states, which have for so long struggled for an independent existence under the shadow of the mighty Empire. At last, one more adventurous than the rest presses forward to snatch a morsel in the shape of a scrap of territory here, a trifle of trade there. And instant pulverisation is not the meed of such temerity; the great nation, partially aroused for the moment, laughs, and returns lazily to its political squabbles and its apathetical indifference to foreign matters. Secure in the knowledge of its power and resources, the Empire believes that it can afford magnanimity; its muscles are, moreover, no longer trained; its senses are dulled; sudden activity is distasteful; the nation is ageing; degeneration has set in. But, even as with men so with nations, there will always be found courageous individuals to follow the lead of the adventurous spirit; and the isolated but successful attempt to get the better of the Empire develops in time to a steady competition on the part of all. Younger and more vigorous states are growing up, stripling nations, hardened, even as was the great Empire in the days of its youth, in the struggle for existence. The nation outmanœuvred and outpaced in commerce and trade, poverty and the consequent misery daily on the increase amongst the overcrowded populace, internecine conflict grows apace, and day by day develops into dormant rebellion, which, supported by powerful politicians, becomes impossible of suppression and a growing menace to

the Empire. Contempt for weakness replaces fear of strength in the outside world; determined effort replaces wary temerity in the adventurous spirit; the great Empire is, all unknowing, face to face with a powerful adversary, or a combination of such, in a renewed struggle for existence; the inept hand and the iron hand, the enfeebled frame and the active frame, must strike for supremacy; and then, even as in the days of its early manhood, comes war—war to the death.

History teaches that a nation may meet defeat and yet live; it may win victory and yet die. Life or death depends on the extent to which degeneration has taken a hold of the people, on the moral qualities of a nation, on its power of recuperation, on the local conditions, whether one compact whole, whether made up of many isolated parts which may easily break asunder. For even the victor in war must take punishment—punishment which will bear hardly on a weak nation. True, he may, by the exaction of a heavy indemnity, recompense himself for the actual loss incurred; but such recompense will not nullify the shock to the system inflicted by war. It is national stamina, the power of endurance, which can exist only when there has been a healthy national life, a life of activity and arduous labour, that can sustain a nation through the after-effects and collapse which ensue from the shock of a hard-fought struggle. The obese untrained man may crush his enemy through sheer weight, and yet himself succumb from

the shock; and a nation, if already utterly degenerate, will succumb in a similar manner. Adversity fortifies the strong; it destroys the degenerate.

But it depends on the victor and on neutral nations whether the vanquished be granted the opportunity to recuperate; for nations will seize that which they desire, provided they may do so with impunity. An aged Empire of world-wide possessions and great wealth need hardly hope for opportunity of recuperation; for envy and hatred follow hard on the heels of greatness, and prestige once lost through defeat, enemies arise on all sides to snatch at the spoils. Thus to such a nation, defeat—at first considered insignificant—may yet come to involve inevitable destruction in the end.

War is the ultimate arbiter.

No nation can count on permanently escaping war. There is, and can be, no sentiment in the struggle for existence; for nations are, so to speak, savages actuated, not by motives of humanity and philanthropy, but by pure self-interest. It can hardly be denied that any nation of modern times, as of past, would forthwith filch the wealth or territory of its neighbour, provided it might do so with impunity: fear alone is the restraining force, and with the removal of fear robbery and violence would prevail throughout the world. Nations are checked in their predatory instincts in part by fear of the owner, in part by fear of the neighbours; but it is actual fear of attack and defeat, and not so much fear of a bad name,

that restrains. It is the balance of power which safeguards the existence of petty states from the depredations of their powerful neighbours; though there are many instances, even in modern history, where this defence has failed. But this balance of power is helpless to prevent war between two great nations: neighbouring nations can but offer mediation, for stronger measures endanger a general convulsion; their main efforts can be directed to the localisation of the conflict alone. It is only in the case of two weak states that the Powers can venture to intervene with success. The European Concert could check turbulence in the Balkan Peninsula; but it could by no means interfere between the United States and Spain, or between Great Britain and the Transvaal; and still less could it venture to interfere between two of the leading Powers of the world. In such a struggle other nations must stand aloof or take part. A concert of great nations, which should dictate terms to two of their number about to engage in war, would presuppose identical interests amongst all, which is impossible.

And neither will virtue in a great nation protect it from attack. Such a one actuated by the highest sentiments of philanthropy, consistently generous and magnanimous to weaker states, with a deep regard for national morality, for a good name, for missionary enterprise and the extension of Christianity, regarding a peaceful and virtuous existence as the noblest of national aims, must yet live. It must endeavour to

gain wealth, if only to ameliorate the lot of its struggling populace, if only as a means by which it shall be enabled to educate the masses; wealth is an indispensable adjunct to greatness in a nation. And, moreover, the pursuit of wealth involves competition in trade and commerce; and competition involves strife, which, if stern and severe—and it must be both if success would be achieved—involves bitterness, recrimination, and possibly a war of tariffs, and arouses the passions of the competitors, and with national passion comes real war. It must be remembered, moreover, that virtue in itself is the cause of envy and hatred, for the virtuous man will still prate of his virtue.

But there is yet another point. Pride of race is, in nations, an incentive to war, even as in a man it is a spur to exertion. Nations, like men, also have ambition. Cut away this ambition and pride of race, and what is left? A worthless nation, or a worthless man. The slightest curb placed on the ambition of a nation touches its pride of race, the national honour, and quickly rouses a great people to a sense of injury or insult which can be expiated by war alone. It is doubtless the case that diplomacy may smooth over such difficulties in the case of two friendly nations; but how if these nations be bitter adversaries in commercial competition? A little thing may at any moment precipitate a conflict between two nations whose interests clash.

Thus, come what will, war must be the ultimate

arbiter in the struggles of nations for existence; and, moreover, do what it may, no nation can hope to avoid it for ever. Youth will strike in order to gain position; manhood will strike in order to maintain or better its position; age will strike to recover position; senility must strike or die. So with nations —all must be prepared to strike.

Woe to that nation which in time of peace forgets war.

CHAPTER II

PEACE STRATEGY AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

The Three Branches of the Conduct of War—The Illustration afforded by Prussia.

A NATION is ever at war in the struggle for existence.

The conduct of this ever-present war is made up of three main branches: first, what may be called peace strategy, which is commonly known as foreign, colonial, or, it may be, home policy, but which is in reality the strategical dealing which one nation has with others; secondly, preparation for war, which runs concurrently with peace strategy; and, thirdly, actual warlike operations, which are the operations undertaken by the armed forces of a nation, whether on sea or land, by which the enemy shall be forced to submit.

It is for peace strategy to:—

1. Lay down the national objective; that is, to detect the principal adversary or adversaries in the struggle for existence.

2. To evolve a general plan of operations, with

a view to the national resources of whatever nature at disposal, and the resources of the enemy.

3. To isolate and weaken the adversary.

4. To secure the co-operation, or failing that the neutrality, of other nations.

5. To consolidate the nation.

It is for preparation for war to :—

1. Render the whole national resources immediately available; that is, to organise and make ready the instrument, the armed forces, with a view to the delivery of a decisive blow at the decisive moment.

2. To evolve a plan of actual campaign suitable to the strength of the armed forces available, and to modify this plan from day to day according to the relative strength of the two combatants.

3. To establish an efficient intelligence in the adversary's territory, and, if necessary, in that of neutrals, by means of which, not only shall good information be forthcoming, but false information circulated, sedition and disunion caused in the ranks of the adversary, and that adversary brought into disrepute throughout the civilised world.

4. In conjunction with peace strategy, and as preparation progresses, to choose the decisive moment at which the blow should be delivered.

If the adversary cannot be brought to withdraw from the contest in the struggle for existence by these measures of peace strategy and preparation, a decisive issue must be sought for by actual warlike operations.

It is for actual warlike operations to :—

1. Strike a decisive blow at the decisive moment with the whole available national force at the most vulnerable point of the adversary, in order to force the submission of the latter at the earliest possible moment.

No exact line of demarkation can be drawn between the operations of peace strategy and preparation for war; or similarly between the operations of peace strategy and the war strategy of actual warlike operations. Peace strategy is the work of the statesman in conjunction with the head of the armed forces; preparation for war is the work of the head of the armed forces in conjunction with the statesman; actual warlike operations is the work of the head of the armed forces.

As the strategy of the theatre of war gradually merges into and reaches its climax in the tactics of the battlefield, so does peace strategy, of which the theatre is the whole world, gradually, as war becomes imminent, attain its culminating point in the war strategy of the actual theatre of war. Tactics can only hope for decisive success if based upon sound strategy; and similarly, war strategy can only hope for success if based upon sound peace strategy. Peace strategy is, in fact, a part, or rather the basis, of actual military operations; and every single measure which a nation proposes to adopt in peace-time should be weighed and considered with regard to the probable and possible results it may have

on success or failure in the inevitable and ultimate war.

The first step in peace strategy is to detect the principal adversary or adversaries in the struggle for existence; for a failure in this vital matter must of necessity involve a breakdown in all the other duties of peace strategy and scientific preparation for war. If unknown, the adversary cannot be weakened and isolated; the neutrality or assistance of other nations cannot be ensured; no plan of operations or of campaign can be evolved; intelligence cannot be established; the decisive moment can neither be foreseen nor selected.

The leader, or leaders, of a nation are in reality, even in peace-time, generals who direct the forces under their command to success or failure, according as they are capable or incapable men, and according as the material under their command is disciplined or undisciplined. As a general in the field must decide in which part of the theatre of war he will remain on the defensive, and as he must determine the vulnerable points of the enemy at which he intends to strike with his whole force; so must the leader of a nation decide which is the nation by whose defeat he has most to gain, and against that nation he must, if he would lead his country to success, prepare for a deliberate offensive with the whole force at his command, while remaining on the defensive against other nations. Such are the methods by which Prussia, deliberately attacking and defeating

Austria, founded the German Empire; such are the methods by which she, afterwards attacking and defeating France, the nation from whom she had most to fear, and by whose defeat she had most to gain, consolidated the German Empire, taking the leading place amongst European nations; and such are the methods, it is but fair to infer, by which she will gain the next step of her ambition, a leading place as a World-Power, until she fulfil her legitimate ambition as mistress of the world.

* * * * * *

The Illustration Afforded by Prussia.*

The history of Prussia during the last half-century gives an excellent illustration of peace strategy as conducted by a weak and by a strong Government.

In 1850 Prussia had but just passed through a revolutionary period, in which the King had with difficulty succeeded in upholding his power against the people, and in retaining control of the army, which he had been forced to use for the suppression of the revolution. In constant fear, however, of the independent German States, who supported the

* All efforts to learn from German success in war are regarded with considerable suspicion by Englishmen as attempts to Germanise the British army. The fact remains, however, that Germany is the only nation which has, up to the present in the world's history, given us an example of war conducted on scientific principles. She has, it should be noted, in the past half-century, struck down two of the great nations of the world. Her methods are still the best example obtainable.

people, and also of the power of the people and of politicians, he could hardly be considered a great power in the land, and the Government was in reality a representative form of Government. It was a Government without a head.

In this same year, 1850, Prussia and Austria, who up to that time had been allies, found themselves face to face in open competition for the leadership of Germany. War was imminent. Austria was supported by Russia and by many German States. Prussia, standing alone, obviously too weak to meet Austria in war, signed the convention of Olmutz, by which she made a complete surrender of all the points at issue. Bismarck, who was at that time but just coming to the front, appears to have been one of the principal advisers of the King in this crisis; and grasping the fact that war with Austria would mean defeat, his weight was thrown on the side of surrender. But recognising that war with Austria was inevitable, he appears to have deliberately thought out the situation from the purely strategical point of view.

"From now until 1866 his whole policy was ceaselessly devoted to bringing about such a disposition of the forces of Europe that Austria might be left without allies, and Prussia be able to regain the upper hand in German affairs." *

He, in other words, selected that nation from which Prussia had most to fear, and by whose defeat she

* "Bismarck and the Foundation of the German Empire," by James W. Headlam, p. 103.

had most to gain; and against that nation he adopted an offensive policy.

In 1854 the crisis between Russia and Turkey arose. Russia stood alone; Turkey was supported by England, France, and Austria. On which side should Prussia throw her weight? Mr. Headlam gives us Bismarck's opinion as follows:—

"Bismarck from the beginning regarded the situation with apprehension; he saw that Prussia was being entangled in a struggle in which she had much to lose and nothing to gain. If she continued to support the Western Powers she would incur the hatred of Russia; then, perhaps, by a sudden change of policy on the part of Napoleon, she would be left helpless and exposed to Russian vengeance. If war were to break out, and Prussia took part in the war, then the struggle between France and Russia would be fought out on German soil, and whoever was victorious Germany would be the loser. What interests of theirs were at stake that they should incur this danger? Why should Prussia sacrifice herself to preserve English influence in the Mediterranean, or the interests of Austria on the Danube? He wished for exactly the opposite policy; the embarrassment of Austria must be the opportunity of Prussia; now was the time to recover the lost position in Germany. The dangerous friendship of Austria and Russia was dissolved; if Prussia came to an understanding with the Czar, it was now Austria that would be isolated. The other German States would not desire

to be dragged into a war to support Austrian dominion in the East. Let Prussia be firm, and they would turn to her for support, and she would once more be able to command a majority in the Diet."

For these reasons he recommended his Government to preserve an armed neutrality, in union, if possible, with the other German States. If they were to take sides, he preferred it should not be with the Western Powers, for, as he said:—

"We must look abroad for allies, and among the European Powers Russia is to be had on the cheapest terms; it wishes only to grow in the East, the other two at our expense." *

Bismarck was not yet in power, however; his advice was neglected, and Prussia supported Austria.

The most noticeable feature of Bismarck's policy at this time was his single-minded grasp of essentials, his unswerving loyalty to his King and his country.

The following is the picture drawn by Mr. Headlam of the Prussian Government in those days:—

"It was a melancholy picture; a King violent and timid, obstinate and irresolute: his will dragged now this way, now that, by his favourites, his wife, and his brother; his own ministers intriguing against each other; ambassadors recommending a policy instead of carrying out their instructions; and the Minister-President standing calmly by, as best he

* "Bismarck and the Foundation of the German Empire," by James W. Headlam, p. 105.

could, patching up the appearance of a consistent policy." *

From the above picture it is hardly difficult to understand the impossibility of following the dictates of pure strategy. Popular sympathy as a whole lay with the Austrians; and the King appears to have been swayed by the desire for popularity. Prussia in any case bound herself to support Austria, in defiance of the fact that war between Prussia and Austria, if the former would become a power in Europe, was inevitable. That this alliance was faulty strategy is clear, unless the deliberate intention had been to throw dust in the eyes of Austria. Mr. Headlam clearly shows that this false move was due to the form of government, and he compares this form of government—an autocratic government under a weak autocrat—with representative government in Great Britain.

"Under a weak sovereign the policy of the country must always be distracted by palace intrigue, just as in England under a weak Cabinet it will be distracted by party faction. The ministers must always be prepared to find their best-laid schemes overthrown by the influence exerted upon the royal mind by his private friends or even by his family. It may be said that tenure of office under these conditions would be impossible to a man of spirit; it was certainly very difficult; an able and determined minister was

* "Bismarck and the Foundation of the German Empire," by James W. Headlam, p. 110.

as much hampered by this private opposition as by Parliamentary discussion. It is often the fashion to say that parliamentary government is difficult to reconcile with a strong foreign policy; the experiences of Prussia from the year 1815 to 1863 seem to show that under monarchical government it is equally difficult."

But with parliamentary government it is not only under a weak Cabinet that the policy of the country is distracted by party faction, and the experience of Great Britain would seem to show that the strongest of Cabinets is constantly hampered in its duty by party factions. There are men in England, moreover, who say that intrigue is an evil not entirely confined to autocratic government, and not wholly absent from parliamentary government. It is, however, indeed clear, from this example of Prussia, that correct peace strategy cannot be expected from a weak government, be that government autocratic or representative.

Bismarck, never wavering in his recognition of the principal feature in Prussia's strategical position—that of the inevitable struggle between Prussia and Austria—and seeing clearly that the ultimate result of that struggle would depend on brute force—that is, war—turned his whole energy towards converting France from an enemy into an ally. In his efforts he found himself opposed by popular prejudice and ignorance—that prejudice and ignorance which is ever inseparable from an uneducated nation. Prussian

ministers, and even the King, prejudiced in favour of hereditary monarchy, objected to an alliance with an "upstart"—that is, Napoleon. Such a prejudice was to Bismarck, as to all men who have studied strategy, entirely absurd. What mattered it that Napoleon was an upstart, provided he assisted Prussia to defeat Austria in the forthcoming struggle? What matter the means provided the end be attained? Immoral? May be. In Bismarck's words:—

"The only sound principle of action in a great State is political egoism, and not romanticism; and it is unworthy of a great State to fight for any matter which does not concern its own interests."*

In 1862 Bismarck became Minister-President and Foreign Minister of Prussia; and it is from this time that Prussia's successful peace strategy dates. In 1863 Russian Poland rebelled; and it was to be expected that this rebellion, if not suppressed, would quickly spread to Prussian Poland. England, France, and Austria were not only in sympathy with the Poles, but were discussing the advisability of intervention, to force Russia to recognise the independence of Poland. This question nearly concerned Prussia, and it was obviously impossible that she should stand aloof. Should she range herself with Russia against the Poles, or with the remainder of Europe on the side of the Poles? By joining Western Europe, Prussia would perform a noble and generous

* "Bismarck and the Foundation of the German Empire," by James W. Headlam, p. 83.

action—the more noble and generous in that it would be performed at her own expense. She would be assisting one of those nations, afterwards described as "rightly struggling to be free," to obtain its independence. Such a course could not but obtain for her the sympathy of all civilised nations; the sympathy of a large section of the German people was already with the Poles.

And now let us turn to the purely strategical view of the question.

Bismarck's underlying plan must not be forgotten. He, recognising that if Prussia would fulfil her ambition, war with Austria was inevitable, had determined on war. With this object in view he was doing his utmost to isolate Austria, and especially to withdraw France from her alliance. By joining Russia against the Poles, it would be Prussia that would become practically isolated.

The question really came to this—from which had Prussia most to fear?

1. From an independent Poland?
2. From an alliance between France and Austria?

The danger of war between Prussia and Russia, on the one hand, and France and Austria on the other, was great. An independent Poland, however, meant death to Prussia. In Bismarck's words:—

"No one then," he wrote, "could doubt that an independent Poland would be the irreconcilable enemy of Prussia, and would remain so till they had conquered the mouth of the Vistula and every Polish-speaking

village in West and East Prussia, Pomerania, and Silesia." *

Mr. Headlam tells us :—

"Napoleon had proposed that a landing should be made in Lithuania, in order to effect a junction with the Poles; Bismarck had immediately declared that if this were done he should regard it as a declaration of war against Prussia. So deep was the indignation of Alexander that he wrote himself to the King of Prussia, proposing an alliance and a joint attack on France and Austria. It must have been a great temptation to Bismarck, but he now showed the prudence which was his great characteristic as a diplomatist; he feared that in a war of this kind the brunt would fall upon Prussia, and that when peace was made the control of negotiations would be with the Czar. He wished for war with Austria, but he was determined that when war came he should have the arrangement of the terms of peace. On his advice the King refused the offer."†

What Mr. Headlam terms Bismarck's "great characteristic as a diplomatist" was merely a knowledge of strategy. Such a knowledge should most obviously be a characteristic of every statesman, for without it the peace strategy of a nation must be bad. In this case, the independence of Poland

* "Bismarck and the Foundation of the German Empire," by James W. Headlam, p. 174.

† *Ibid.*, p. 177.

meant death to Prussia; war against Austria and France, but with Russia as an ally, did not. It was a choice between the lesser of two evils; and Prussia must, at all costs, assist in the suppression of the Poles. Sentiment was in no way permitted to enter into Bismarck's calculations; what mattered it to him whether right were or were not on the side of the Poles? If such struggles spelt disaster to Prussia, such struggles must be stamped out. Poland was dangerous; therefore Poland must be killed.

Morality; immorality—what are such things to great nations when their fate is at stake? Nations can no more afford to display morality than romanticism in their dealings with other nations. To do so is to forget the law of nature, "Your life or mine."

It is interesting to note how, while Bismarck was struggling to steer his country with success through a great crisis, he was constantly hampered in his work by politicians in the House of Parliament, who took, as was to be expected, the purely sentimental view of the relations of Prussia with Poland. Prussia had, however, not at that time entirely recovered from her attempted revolution of 1848; and politicians, in place of confining their efforts to unimportant and harmless internal questions, were still permitted to occupy themselves with vital questions on which the security of the country depended, and on which they were unfitted to form an opinion. These men, of whom Bismarck speaks with such scorn and

contempt, apparently did their utmost to ruin their country; but having no power save that of their tongues, their efforts were futile. The King, supported by the army, was in a position to suppress the annoyance whenever it might become really dangerous. Mr. Headlam puts the question of the form of government, and of the issues which depended upon it, very clearly.

"'Why will not the King of Prussia be content with the position which the Queen of England holds, or the King of the Belgians; then all his unpopularity would be gone?' was a question asked at the time by an English writer. We may ask, on the other hand, why should the King of Prussia sacrifice his power and prerogative? The question is really as absurd as it would be to ask why is not an English Parliament content with the power enjoyed by the Prussian Parliament? It was a commonplace of the time that the continued conflict showed a want of statesmanship: so it did, if it is statesmanship always to court popularity, and always to surrender one's cause when one believes it to be right, even at the risk of ruining one's country. It must be remembered that through all these years the existence of Prussia was at stake. If the Prussian Government insisted on the necessity for a large and efficient army, they were accused of reckless militarism. People forgot that the Prussian monarchy could no more maintain itself without a large army than the British Empire could without

a large navy. In all the secret diplomatic negotiations of the time, the dismemberment of Prussia was a policy to be considered. France wished to acquire part of the left bank of the Rhine; Austria had never quite given up hope of regaining part of Silesia. It was not fifty years since Prussia had acquired half the kingdom of Saxony; might not a hostile combination restore this territory? And then the philanthropy of England and the intrigues of France were still considering the possibility of a revived Poland, but in Poland would have to be included part of the territory which Prussia had acquired." *

Englishmen to whom the fear of invasion and defeat is but a remote possibility, to whom the struggle for existence is non-existent, cannot grasp the necessities of a nation with whom the fear of this struggle is ever present. For a kingdom in the position of Prussia to place the government of the country, including its peace strategy and the control of its armed forces, in the hands of party politicians would have been suicidal. Fortunately for Prussia, her King, her great men and statesmen, and her soldiers recognised the necessity for one head in all matters connected with foreign questions. Had Prussia given in to her politicians, there can be no doubt but that Poland would have become an independent nation, resulting in the annihilation of Prussia as a state. That nation which must struggle

* "Bismarck and the Foundation of the German Empire," by James W. Headlam, pp. 188-189.

for its existence, and with whom victory or defeat spells life or death, dare not place power in the hands of its party politicians.

It was from this struggle between King and Parliament that the development of Prussia as a nation in arms is dated. Mr. Headlam writes:—

"It is often said that from this conflict must be dated the great growth of militarism in Europe; it is to the victory of the King and Bismarck that we are to attribute the wars which followed and the immense armaments which since then have been built up in Europe. To a certain extent, of course, this is true, though it is not clear that the presence of these immense armies is an unmixed evil. It is, however, only half the truth; the Prussian Government was not solely responsible. It was not they who began arming, it was not they who first broke the peace which had been maintained in Europe since 1815. Their fault seems to have been, not that they armed first, but that when they put their hand to the work, they did it better than other nations. If they are exposed to any criticism in the matter, it must rather be this, that the Government of the late King had unduly neglected the army; they began to prepare not too soon, but almost too late. It was in Austria in 1848 that the new military dominion began; Austria was supported by Russia and imitated by France; Prussia, surrounded by these Empires, each at least double herself in population, was compelled to arm in self-defence.

By not doing so sooner she had incurred the disgrace of Olmutz; her whole policy had been weak and vacillating, because the Government was frightened at stirring up a conflict in which they would almost certainly be defeated." *

Up to this date Prussia's weak foreign policy was due to the fact that her Parliament was too strong, and had too much say in national affairs. Vacillation can only be due to the absence of any definite plan. A definite plan would appear to be impossible to party government; and it is, moreover, impossible, it would seem, for party politicians to avoid subordinating national interests to their own party interests. As Mr. Headlam says: "The responsibility for it"—that is, for the conflict between King and Parliament at a time of grave national emergency—"lies partly with the leaders of the Liberal party, who, as we know from memoirs that have since been published, were acting against their own convictions in opposing the military demands of the Government, for they feared that otherwise the party would not follow them." These men, in fact, did not hesitate to risk the annihilation of Prussia to serve the interests of their party, that is, their own interests.

It must be remembered that throughout this struggle for supremacy between King and Parliament the preparation for war of the Prussian Army

* "Bismarck and the Foundation of the German Empire," by James W. Headlam, pp. 189-190.

was being steadily carried out. The real government of the country was in the hands of the King and his ministers, Bismarck and Roon; and, notwithstanding the fact that the Parliament did its utmost through several years to prevent any increase to the army or its proper preparation for war, such increase and preparation nevertheless proceeded.

The organisation of the ruling powers of the country was as follows:—

The King was the head of the State and the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces.

Bismarck was Foreign Minister—that is, the man responsible to the King for the peace strategy of the nation.

Roon was War Minister—that is, the man responsible to the King for the efficiency of the armed forces.

Moltke was Chief of the Staff and Strategical Adviser; and it seems probable that his advice on all strategical matters, whether connected wtth preparation for war or with peace strategy, was taken without question by the King. It will be seen that the King was the man who bore all responsibility for the efficiency of the three great branches of administration connected with the existence of Prussia—peace strategy, preparation for war, and the actual conduct of war. He was, as it were, the general in chief command, and his ministers with Moltke were his staff officers. These officers were nominated by the King; and the Parliament

neither had any control over them nor power to effect their removal, provided the King held fast.

The Parliament was responsible for the purely internal questions of the country, the petty affairs of every-day life. It was, however, seeking to withdraw power from the hands of the King and his ministers. With this object in view it refused to vote the money necessary for the upkeep of the army. A loophole, which, fortunately for Prussia, existed in the Constitution, enabled the King to obtain, or at least to expend, the money necessary for the army without the consent of Parliament.

In 1864 the war between Denmark and the German Confederation, headed by Prussia and Austria, over the question of Schleswig-Holstein, broke out. The success or failure of the German arms was never for a moment in doubt; and the war is chiefly noticeable in that an opportunity was given Prussia to test her army machine. The Danes having been defeated the settlement of the destiny of these states devolved upon Prussia and Austria, and was cunningly utilised by Bismarck to bring about the long-prepared war with Austria. It is interesting to note how he, in his diplomacy, never for a moment forgot that success or failure lay in the battlefield, and that his principal duty as a Prussian statesman was to weaken the proposed adversary's military forces and to strengthen those of his own country.

It is difficult to differentiate between peace strategy

and preparation for war; between the work of the statesman and the work of the soldier. These two are, in fact, so intimately connected that either one must break down if it lacks the efficient assistance of the other. They run concurrently, with the same object in view, which is success on the battlefield. Bismarck's peace strategy succeeded in isolating Austria; it ensured the active co-operation of Italy, the neutrality of France and Russia, and, in fact, superiority of numbers in the theatre of war. Roon's careful preparation of the Prussian army ensured superior organisation, a more rapid mobilisation, and a better and more easily directed army machine than that of the Austrians. Moltke's strategy ensured that the work of Bismarck and Roon should not be thrown away, and that the magnificent machine which Prussia possessed in her army should be utilised to the full. It is difficult to pick a fault in the work of these three men. One there was, however. While Austria was actually mobilising, Moltke pointed out from day to day to the King the advantage that would be gained by immediate mobilisation, thus retaining the advantage which a more advanced state of preparation had given over Austria, and pointing out the possible consequences of delay. But the King fearing, apparently, the enmity of France, the onus of being the aggressor, and the moral responsibility of plunging two nations closely allied in blood into war, delayed mobilisation until the last possible moment. Valuable time which could never

be regained was thus lost to the Prussians, and, though brilliantly successful in the end, we must yet note Moltke's cry of what might have been. The King was, however, a soldier, with a soldier's training, and knew full well when continued hesitancy might spell disaster.

Mistakes in strategy which must not be made by nations unprepared for war, and ruled by civilians ignorant of all matters connected with war, can with comparative impunity be made by nations fully prepared and ruled by soldiers. But even in this instance how much blood was shed in payment of the King's hesitancy?

Prussia's readiness, however, ensured that the greater part of the bloodshed, as well as the misery which must always fall on that country which forms the theatre of operations, should fall on her adversary.

Immediately the war with Austria had been brought to a successful conclusion, Bismarck turned his attention to France. France would not, obviously, if she could in any way prevent it, permit of an united Germany. But it was in the unification of Germany alone that Bismarck could hope to establish such a Power as should be able to hold its own against its powerful neighbours, France and Russia. Prussia had, by her success against Austria, roused the jealousy of France. War between the two nations was inevitable. Was Prussia to wait until attacked, or was she to base her hopes of success on a bold offensive policy? The offensive enjoys the initia-

tive; it acts at its own convenience. The defensive awaits the pleasure of its adversary; and it is almost impossible for it to "fathom the designs of the offensive." The advantage given by a tactical initiative on the field of battle is great; strategical initiative is essential to success; the initiative in peace strategy can alone win. A defensive peace strategy can by no means hope to succeed.

It is entirely obvious that Bismarck had, even before the conclusion of peace with Austria, determined on an offensive policy, which should culminate in war against France. It was undoubtedly with this object in view that such lenient terms were granted to Austria; and we see in those terms themselves Bismarck's first effort to establish friendly relations with Austria and to cause France to be regarded as the common enemy of the German races.

"They* were extraordinarily lenient, namely, that, with the exception of Venetia, the territory of Austria should remain intact; that no war indemnity should be expected; that the Main should form the boundary of Prussian ambition; that South Germany should be left free, and might enter into close connection with Austria if it chose: the only condition was that no intervention or mediation of France should be allowed."†

* The terms offered to Austria.

† "Bismarck and the Foundation of the German Empire." By James W. Headlam, p. 273.

Not content with this, Bismarck cajoled Napoleon into making a demand for a cession of territory as a counterpoise to the increased strength of Prussia. He then, though he himself had constantly suggested this demand, utilised it to rouse German feeling against France. Napoleon would appear to have been entirely honest in his dealings with Prussia, Bismarck entirely dishonest. Bismarck, in fact, played with Napoleon. Refusing to cede German territory, he gave Napoleon to understand that he would be prepared to permit him to take Belgium; he obtained the draft of the treaty suggested by Napoleon, and afterwards utilised it to destroy English sympathy for France. His every action had for its object the isolation of France. Concurrently with this work he established the North German Confederation, of which the principal feature was that the armies of the various states took their place in the Prussian army machine under the orders of the King of Prussia. It was this brotherhood in arms which in reality cemented the friendship between the different states and rendered the present German nation possible. But a successful war against a common enemy could alone convert these still semi-distinct states into one indissoluble whole. It was Roon's work to organise the armies; it was Moltke's work to prepare the strategical plan of campaign, and probably to name the decisive moment at which war should be declared; it was Bismarck's work to bring about that war so that all Germans should

enter upon it in a spirit of enthusiasm, so that France should be isolated; in short, so that France should appear the aggressor.

The story of the means by which he brought about this war is interesting.

A King was wanting in Spain, and a member of the Royal House of Prussia was applied for by the Spaniards. France could in no wise permit this prince to accept, for by so doing she would run the risk of the establishment of German influence on both sides of her. France would, obviously, rather go to war. Bismarck, therefore, pressed the candidature. He endeavoured to do so secretly, in order that the French might remain unsuspicious until the fact was actually accomplished. Had he succeeded he would have gained an active ally in Spain. In this, however, he failed. Napoleon became aware of the intrigue, and on his representations the prince withdrew from the candidature. Napoleon, failing to recognise the fact that Prussia was anxious for and determined on war, endeavoured to browbeat the King of Prussia. The opportunity was seized by Bismarck; he published such facts as he thought fit in the papers, roused excitement throughout Germany, and caused France to declare war. It was brilliant peace strategy, which is possible only to a nation which gives its whole thoughts to war, which has determined on and deliberately prepared for a war. Such peace strategy is, moreover, possible only to a nation which is directed by a single

head, a man who is a soldier, one who has studied strategy.

Mr. Headlam compares the Governments of the two countries :—

"What a contrast is there between the two countries. On the one hand, a King and a Minister who, by seven years of loyal co-operation, have learnt to trust and depend upon one another, who together have faced danger, who have not shrunk from extreme unpopularity, and who, just for this reason, can now depend on the absolute loyalty of the people. On the other side the Emperor broken in health, his will shattered by prolonged pain and sickness, trying by the introduction of liberal institutions to free himself from the burden of government and weight of responsibility which he had voluntarily taken upon his shoulders. At Berlin, Bismarck's severity and love of power had brought it about that the divergent policy and uncertainty of early years had ceased; there was one mind and one will directing this State; the unauthorised interference and amateur criticism of courtiers were no longer permitted. In France, all the evils from which Prussia had been freed by Bismarck were increasing; here there was no single will; the Ministry were divided, there was no authority over them; no one could foresee by whom the decision of the Emperor would be determined; the deliberate results of long and painful negotiations might be overthrown in ten minutes

by the interference of the Empress or the advice of Prince Napoleon. The Emperor would pursue half a dozen inconsistent policies in as many hours. And then, below all, there was this fatal fact, that Napoleon could not venture to be unpopular. He knew the folly of the course into which he was being driven, but he did not dare to face the mob of Paris, or to defy the Chamber of Deputies. He owed his throne to universal suffrage, and he knew that the people who had set him up could quickly overthow him. No man can ever govern who fears unpopularity. Bismarck did not; Napoleon did." *

The features of Prussia's peace strategy are, that her inevitable enemy was clearly recognised, and that an offensive war with that enemy was deliberately determined upon. Bismarck's every effort was directed to isolating and weakening the enemy; to strengthening Prussia by suppressing rebellion in the country, by drawing closer the bonds which bound her to her tributary states, and by obtaining active assistance from other nations. Every trick that a cunning mind could conceive was resorted to in furtherance of his schemes; morality was disregarded; secrecy and surprise were his chief weapons.

And hand in hand with this peace strategy went preparation for war.

* "Bismarck and the Foundation of the German Empire," by James W. Headlam, p. 343-344.

CHAPTER III

PREPARATION FOR WAR AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

The Illustration afforded by Prussia—The Illustration afforded by France—The Illustration afforded by the Boer War—The Illustration afforded by China and Japan.

CERTAIN conditions are necessary for success in war. These conditions are :—

1. Great superiority of strength when fully developed ; and, if the nation be unprepared, some factor that will gain time and allow her full strength to be developed and brought into play before defeat ; or—

2. A complete state of preparation which enables a nation to surprise, strike, and defeat its adversary before that adversary is prepared.

The Illustration Afforded by Prussia.

Many years prior to the Austro-Prussian war, that war, which was recognised as inevitable, was considered in all its bearings. The probability that Austria, with her superior force, would seize the initiative and assume the offensive was carefully considered, and a scheme was involved by Moltke by which Austria should be forced to invade Prussia by way of Silesia,

the longest possible route to Berlin, thus giving time to Prussia in which to utilise every possible resource.

France, which, with Italy, having defeated Austria, and in conjunction with Great Britain, having but just previously defeated Russia, was not overlooked. The probabilities were that France would join Austria.

Moltke's scheme proposed to defend the French frontier with a portion—the smaller portion—of the army, while with the greater portion it dealt with Austria, the intention being to defeat the two powerful adversaries in detail.

As has been said, every effort of peace strategy was, with success, directed to detaching France from a possible alliance with Austria, and to attach Italy to Prussia. In the meantime the railway system in Prussia was perfected, railways being built with a strategical purpose, and with a view to the most rapid possible concentration of troops on the Austrian and French frontiers.

As time went on diplomacy was successful, Italy became attached to Prussia, while it became more apparent that France would remain neutral. The Prussian army was gradually increased in numbers, by shortening the length of service with the colours and increasing it in the reserve. Moltke accordingly altered his plans from day to day to suit the altered situation. Part of the troops which were to have defended the French frontier were withdrawn to swell the main army against Austria; the remainder

being considered sufficient to carry out its new duty, the mere observation of France. The alliance with Italy was also considered; for it was obvious that a portion of the Austrian army must be detached from the main operations against Prussia to operate against Italy. When all was reckoned up it was evident that Prussia would be able to place a larger army in the field than Austria; and, thanks to the railway system, would be able to mobilise and concentrate far more rapidly on the frontier.

Austria, unprepared for the unforeseen war, outgeneralled both in diplomacy and in the field, fell an easy victim to the wisdom of the Prussians.

During the war France stood aloof, misled by the specious promises of Bismarck, and failing entirely to grasp the fact that she herself would be the next victim of Prussian strategy. Immediately after the Austro-Prussian war, Prussia perfected her preparations for a war with France. Every fault that had been discovered by the test of war was corrected. It is sufficient to mention two.

1. In the war the Austrian artillery had shown itself to be better armed and better handled tactically than the Prussian. The Prussian, or rather the German artillery, as it had now become, was promptly reorganised and rearmed. Four years later, in the Franco-German war, the German artillery simply overwhelmed the French owing to the superiority in numbers and material, and more especially to superior tactical handling.

2. In the Austro-Prussian war the Prussian cavalry had been kept in reserve for battlefield charges, according to the tactical theory of the time. The Austrians, on the other hand, though they retained a considerable portion of their cavalry for tactical handling, yet employed the greater portion as a strategical weapon for the purpose of screening the march of the army and discovering the enemy's position and strength. This, the true employment of cavalry, was improved upon and introduced into the German army. The cavalry was increased and reorganised, and, instead of being retained merely as a charging reserve for the battlefield, was employed in the Franco-German war almost entirely for screening and scouting duties. The effect of this employment of the German cavalry is too well known to need recapitulation. The French cavalry, on the other hand, was employed as the Prussian cavalry had been in the Austro-Prussian war; and, gallantly as they sacrificed themselves on the field of battle, were, compared to the German cavalry, useless.

In the four years that elapsed between the two wars the Germans had thus not only completely reorganised their artillery and their cavalry, but had also taught all ranks of their army the new and true strategical and tactical employment of these arms. British soldiers will easily recognise the stupendous nature of this performance. This reorganisation was, moreover, owing to the supineness of the French, carried out in secret. But this was not all. The

South German states, formerly allies of Austria, had, after the war with Austria, become a part of the North German Confederation. These waverers, half friends, half enemies, were brought into the great Prussian army system, were organised and took their place in the ranks of the German army. A stupendous work, a work only possible to a nation which could give its whole attention to preparation for a war which it foresaw to be, and intended should be, inevitable.

It would be thought that the incorporation of several states but lately enemies into the German Empire would have been more a source of danger than an assistance in a war with France. It appears a gigantic piece of speculation for Germany to wage war with France within four years of her war with Austria. But it must be remembered that the incorporated states were, after all, Germans, the hereditary enemies of the French. It is also clear that the Prussians recognised that war, which breaks asunder all ties and breeds hatred, also cements friendship between nations as nothing else can. A successful war with France could alone cement Prussia and the allied states into the German Empire.

The conditions given to the French after the war showed no less evidence of strategical thought than had the war preparations.

The acquisition of Alsace and Lorraine gave Germany a strategical frontier by which she could concentrate her armies on the French side of the

difficult mountain defiles in such a position as to deny the Vosges as a line of defence to the French. As Hamley says, this new frontier placed France at the mercy of Germany until such time as the French, by a system of fortifications, could form a new defensive frontier.

Looking back on the history of these times, it is evident that both the Austro-Prussian and the Franco-German wars were but links in the chain which had for its object the formation of a united German Empire.

War with France was indeed inevitable from the day Prussia defeated Austria. By the defeat of France alone could the new German Empire be solidified. Was Prussia to await attack, with the almost certain prospect of defeat; or was she to seize the initiative—attack and defeat France? The Franco-German war was the corollary of the Austro-Prussian war.

The Illustration Afforded by France.

Let us now turn to the French.

There seems but little doubt that Napoleon III. had determined, sooner or later, on war with Prussia. He would appear to have recognised, in a half-hearted way, that war was inevitable; but his position was so insecure, and his time was so fully occupied in dealing with the numerous political factions which existed and in flattering the susceptibilities of an excitable and, at that time, undisciplined nation, that

he had but little leisure in which to deal with foreign affairs.

Preparation had been made, but without method. Compared with the scientific German preparation, it cannot properly be termed "preparation for war."

The French had permitted the Germans to increase their army to a strength greatly superior to their own. This was probably due to the omnipotence of the Paris mob, which could not, of course, stand increased taxation without revolution. The stern discipline which obtained in the German army was apparently somewhat lacking in the French; while the training of the French officers was inferior to that of the German.

While the Germans possessed seven strategical railways for the concentration of troops on the frontier, the French possessed but two.

The German plan of campaign, up to the first collision on the battlefield, had been carefully thought out; the details of the preliminary mobilisation and of the strategical concentration had similarly been worked out. From the moment the order went forth to mobilise, everything worked smoothly as clockwork.

On the French side the plan of campaign, if it can be dignified with the name of plan, consisted in a vague determination to invade the South German States, and to detach them from North Germany. No detailed arrangements had, however, been made wherewith to carry out this plan, and, on the order

to mobilise, confusion reigned supreme. The mobilisation of the French forces showed a lack of all scientific preparation; while the proposed strategical concentration could not take place owing to the advance of the Germans.

The immediate result of the French lack of strategical thought and preparation was that the French forces pushed forward to the frontier, divided into two parts, practically without cohesion or plan, and, not yet up to their full strength, were fallen upon and defeated by the overwhelming numbers of the fully prepared Germans.

The question of defeat had never been seriously considered by the French; and no arrangements had therefore been made to arrest the natural sequence of events, defeat leading to defeat and to ultimate rout. Caught unprepared, they never recovered.

Every effort was made by the great and gallant nation to retrieve its disasters. Enormous levies were raised, but the Germans gave no time for efficient organisation. The whole nation was roused, but too late, and its struggles were ineffectual.

The pity of it! A great and gallant nation, with glorious traditions unsurpassed, writhing in its ineffectual struggles to overcome its bitterly hated enemy. Its manhood full of fight—brave, determined, robust, patriotic, devoted, every quality with which to wrest victory, even at the eleventh hour, from the hands of the victor; every quality save two—

organisation and training. Masses of Frenchmen in their hundreds of thousands, willing to die for their Fatherland, but that they knew not how, and there were no trained officers to teach them, for they had failed to recognise that the war was inevitable.

Time and time alone could enable the great helpless masses of men to be organised into effective fighting bodies. Time alone could produce trained officers. A few months, a few weeks even, of the years which had been wasted before the war might have saved France. Against the might of the German organisation, the outcome of years of thought and work, the masses of ignorant and ill-organised Frenchmen were helpless. Like those of a bogged horse, their efforts but resulted in plunging the nation into deeper ruin.

And so it will ever be, whether on sea or land, when two adversaries of comparatively equal resources —one prepared, one unprepared—meet in deadly conflict in the struggle for existence.

Think of it, ye Englishmen! Think of a great and proud nation tasting to the full the bitterness of national humiliation and defeat. Think of it, ye who through twenty long years failed to recognise that the Boer war was inevitable; think of it, ye who were caught napping, and thank God it was but a petty nation of farmers that assailed you! And, ye English statesmen, responsible for your country, think of it!

* * * * * *

From being but a powerful kingdom, Prussia has become the head of the great German Empire—an Empire which dominates the whole of Central Europe, and which is day by day extending its dominion over South-Eastern and Western Europe.

The results of Prussia's success in war have not yet ceased; they will only cease when the nation, become slothful and effete through over-prosperity and the absence of war, is no longer able to defend itself against poorer but more vigorous nations. They will only cease when the nation, in place of being ruled, as at present, in all matters connected with war, by the strategist, is governed by the people; when the definite strategical aims and deliberate preparation of the soldier are replaced by the vacillation and "masterly inactivity" of the mob and its representatives; when the nation will be defeated in war. It appears to be an immutable law of nature that success in war should lead to general prosperity. It is the fact that war calls forth the finer qualities of mankind—determination, perseverance, bravery. Without these qualities no nation can hope for success in war; without these qualities no nation can hope for success in commerce.

Before leaving this subject of Prussia's success, let us endeavour clearly to grasp the reasons for that success. Moltke, a great strategist; by no means, so far as one can see, a great genius, but merely a man who had given his lifetime to the study of strategy and a "past-master" in the art of war, and

one who, through this selfsame study, ranks now with the great military geniuses of the world. He, it would appear, was the man responsible for the main outlines of Prussia's peace strategy, for that peace strategy is startling in its similarity to Moltke's war strategy—a definite object, a subordination of all side-issues, a weakening of the adversary at the decisive point, a concentration of all available force, and the delivery of a blow which should be decisive.

And Bismarck, the man of whom we greatly hear, a religious man, notable chiefly for his steadfast honesty and unswerving loyalty to his country, and for his utter dishonesty and immorality towards other countries; a soldier who could apparently grasp the fact that his knowledge of strategy, though by no means of a small order, was, in comparison to that of Moltke, but the military wisdom of a child; a man of such nobility of character that he could apparently adopt without question the suggestion of the strategical expert; a man who, in his peace strategy, could hold those strategical essentials inviolate, who could keep in subjection the petty dictates of party policy.

Roon, the War Minister, the man of detail, who knew how to prepare the great military machine, without which all Moltke's strategy, all Bismarck's resolution, would have been useless.

And over all the King, to take the responsibility for the actions of his subordinates—a man's work.

The Illustration Afforded by the Boer War.

In 1881 the Transvaal Boers drove the British out of the Transvaal; and by their victory of Majuba forced Great Britain to recognise the independence of the Transvaal, under the suzerainty of Great Britain.

The people of Great Britain and of the British nation looked upon South Africa as an integral portion of their possessions. They looked upon the Boers as a mere remnant of a decadent race that was fated to be swamped by British immigrants.

There thus existed in South Africa an independent and inimical state, one which had but just defeated Great Britain, a young nation, full of virile qualities, one which, if not assimilated or suppressed, must quickly rise to such power as would enable her to compete with Great Britain for supremacy in South Africa. The situation was, in fact, critical.

That the onward march of civilisation as exemplified by Great Britain should be checked by a petty and half-civilised state was obviously absurd. It was, however, equally absurd to suppose that this new-born nation, closely allied in blood to the majority of Africanders, with an unique history of its own, and with, moreover, a wholesome hatred, not unmixed with contempt, for Great Britain, would remain satisfied with its success at Majuba, and be content to disappear without a struggle from the list of nations. What more natural, having in view the

success of the Boers over the British at Majuba, than that an idea of a united Dutch South Africa should germinate in the minds of the Dutch population? These Dutch races would indeed have been unworthy of their parentage had the thought not gained ground. Such an idea seems, however, to have been unthought of in Great Britain. That a petty nation of farmers could really defy her might, was regarded as an absurdity, not only by the ignorant mass of the population, but even by those who should have known better—the leaders of the nation. The people and statesmen of Great Britain were too ignorant of war to recognise the possibility which careful preparation, with a definite object in view, can bring within the range of probability.

War was inevitable from the day that Majuba was fought and won.

This fact appears to have been clearly recognised by the Boers, and they at once commenced their secret preparation.

The national Dutch sentiment was carefully fostered in Cape Colony, in the Free State, and in Natal.

The Dutch language was in 1882 granted equal rights with the English, and permitted by the British nation to become the leading language in Cape Colony—a British possession. This would seem to have been the first result of Boer peace strategy directed against Great Britain.

The mere attempt to introduce Dutch as an official language in Cape Colony should in itself have been

sufficient to open the eyes of British statesmen and to make them seize the first opportunity to wage war with the Transvaal and to kill this rising nation. For the introduction of the Dutch language was a definite threat against British supremacy in South Africa. The loss of British supremacy in South Africa would mean the disintegration of the Empire. How, indeed, could self-respecting colonies such as Australia, New Zealand, or Canada retain any vestige of sympathy for a mother country which could permit such a heritage as South Africa to slip from her grasp?

Thus the situation in South Africa at the time of the Jameson Raid was as follows:—

President Kruger was secretly doing his utmost to rouse the Dutch Africander spirit throughout South Africa, with a view to the ultimate expulsion of the British race. With this object in view the Dutch language had been introduced into Cape Colony; the Englishman was held up to the Boers as a thing beneath contempt, and at the same time a creature that deserved the hatred of all patriotic Dutchmen. Kruger's emissaries and spies were at work throughout South Africa, on the Continent of Europe, and even in Great Britain itself. He was endeavouring, and apparently with success, to gain control of the Houses of Legislature in Cape Colony, and to manipulate education in the schools. He, in somewhat striking contrast to Great Britain, had apparently unlimited funds at his disposal for his secret service and intelligence work.

"The first step, in fact, had already been taken to ensure success in the proposed war. There remained only the outward and ultimate preparation for war, which consisted in obtaining the necessary arms of the latest pattern. Much, even in this line, had already been done secretly under the excuse of defence against native tribes. Time, and time alone, was required in which to complete the necessary preparations, and to oust Great Britain from South Africa.

Great Britain, on the other hand, was entirely unsuspicious. Up to this time it would seem that one Englishman alone recognised the extreme gravity of the situation, and that that man was Rhodes.

But now the Jameson Raid opened the eyes of the Empire. It seems to have been, in fact, the first inkling the British nation received that any serious complications were likely to occur in that part of the Empire.

In all probability the Jameson Raid has saved the British Empire; and when we take into consideration Mr. Rhodes' vast schemes, his great intellect, and his single-minded love for his country, we may perhaps conjecture that he deliberately promoted the Raid in order to open the eyes of his compatriots.

The Raid, if successful, would obviate the necessity for a war; if unsuccessful it would, at the least, render any further secret preparation for war on the part of the Boers impossible.

The adoption of some such measure could alone force the attention of Great Britain to South Africa; and the great danger to be feared was that Great Britain would continue asleep until too late.

History will probably rank the Jameson Raid with that other great censurable act conducted by Nelson, the seizure of the Danish Fleet—blameworthy, perhaps, but more than justified by necessity.

From that time onwards the Boer preparation was carried forward with little or no pretence at secrecy. The British Empire watched this preparation, but, in its ignorance, with no real misgivings.

Day by day the Empire was nearing a great crisis—the greatest crisis since the time of Napoleon—and its existence was trembling in the balance. And yet no preparation was made to meet the danger—a danger which its enemies had deliberately prepared for some twenty years.

Troops could not be thrown into South Africa because: Firstly, Great Britain had no troops to spare without dislocating her whole army system; and secondly, because such action would give a handle to the Opposition, to the disloyal Irish members, and to the numerous faddists which practically rule the country, thereby embarrassing the Government. It is true that another reason was officially given in the House of Commons, which was, if possible, more foolish than either of the above. It was to the effect that had British troops been thrown into South Africa it would have precipi-

tated the impending crisis, and the war would simply have taken place the sooner.

This explanation entirely disregarded the fact that every day's delay in the declaration of war permitted the Boers to complete their preparation; and this, without a corresponding preparation on the part of Great Britain, rendered their victory the more certain. Such an explanation could only have borne weight had Great Britain been secretly preparing an army of a hundred thousand men to throw suddenly into South Africa with a view to surprising the enemy. It was, therefore, indeed to the interest of Great Britain to force on the war at as early a date as possible; for she, unready herself, would, at the least, meet an enemy whose preparations were incomplete; and in such a case weight, that is, length of purse and superiority in numbers, would ultimately tell.

That Great Britain was utterly unprepared for this war is made manifest by the well-known facts:—*

1. That in September, 1899, war being imminent, there were some ten thousand British troops in South Africa with which to defend Natal and Cape Colony against invasion.

* This book was in the Press before the Report of the Royal Commission on the war in South Africa was published. To correct the book in view of this Report would involve considerable delay in publication; and it, moreover, would seem to be unnecessary, as the Report in most instances conclusively proves the contentions set forth in this work. Where, however, surmises have been proved to be wrong, a note to that effect has been made.

2. That when, by a piece of extraordinary good fortune, or, rather, by the stupidity of the Boers, the actual outbreak of war had been delayed for a month, Great Britain was able to reinforce her troops in South Africa to the extent of some ten thousand men only, with which to meet the onset of the Boers.

3. That though it was known that war was to be waged against a purely mounted enemy, and that, therefore, mounted troops and horses would form one of the principal features in the war, yet no large remount depôts had been established in South Africa. (It is a well-known fact—a fact which is taught even to British infantry officers in peace-time—that horses, after a sea voyage, are unfit for hard work for a considerable period.)

4. No adequate military surveys of the country had been prepared; and yet, to a disciplined and educated army, a map is essential to the proper conduct of operations.

But it is useless to enumerate the thousand and one different details which go to make efficient preparation for war; the statement can hardly be disputed that Great Britain had made no real scientific attempt to meet the Boers in war, and this notwithstanding the fact that to thinking soldiers the war had been inevitable for about twenty years, and imminent for five. Such preparation for war as existed began and ended, it would seem, in the work which could be carried out on the initiative of the soldier who was nominally Commander-in-Chief of the army.

We find, therefore, the Natal army of some fifteen thousand men, mostly composed of infantry, and consequently with but little mobility, placed in a position in which mobility is of the first importance. Its duty was to delay a greatly superior and exceedingly mobile adversary, in order to gain time until reinforcements could arrive. One known method of delaying a superior enemy is to manœuvre from position to position while slowly retiring, and to strike sudden and unexpected blows when opportunity offers or has been made. To carry out such a *rôle* with any hope of success the defender must have greater mobility than the assailant. The use of the Drakensberg and Biggarsberg ranges as a zone of manœuvre was denied to the British general by the fact that Van Reenen's and the neighbouring passes were held by the enemy. This was the only zone of manœuvre in Natal the use of which could counterbalance inferiority in numbers and mobility.

An active delaying campaign was therefore denied to the British Army in Natal. It was too weak to fight in the open, it was too slow to manœuvre. There were but two alternatives—to retire to Durban, or, that last resource of a general who finds himself in so unfortunate a predicament, to occupy a position and to allow himself to be besieged and shelled, or starved into submission, his sole hope to hang on until relieved.

No soldier would willingly see himself in such a situation. Once the blockading lines have been

formed, there can be no hope of breaking out, for any such attempt is foredoomed to failure.

To be besieged is but another way of saying that an army has been hopelessly outgeneralled, or that the nation to which that army belongs is hopelessly unprepared for war.

The sieges of Ladysmith, of Kimberley, and of Mafeking, with all their resulting train of disaster, loss of life, and loss of prestige, were the direct results of Great Britain's lack of preparation for war. The results did not stop there. By a marvellous piece of good fortune, or rather of bad strategy on the part of the Boers, the British were not swept out of South Africa within six weeks of the commencement of the war, but were given an opportunity of retrieving their mistakes.

The method adopted by Great Britain must to European onlookers have appeared little short of ludicrous. It is wise to look at the facts.

Here was a great rambling Empire, without cohesion or head, depending for existence on prestige and the strength of her navy, suddenly surprised, and, whilst utterly unprepared, attacked in a vital point by a fairly well armed, though small, adversary. This small adversary had already within three weeks cooped up, and was besieging practically all the forces of the Empire immediately available in the theatre of war. Such a situation was in itself laughable to the nations of Europe, taught by adversity to consider war and the preparation for

war the main feature in a nation's struggle for existence. But this was not all.

The great mass of the population in the theatre of war was closely allied to the Boers in race, religion, and in speech. A few more Boer successes would cause partial rebellion throughout South Africa. The capture of the seaports would, it might be confidently stated, cause a general rebellion of the whole of Cape Colony against the mother country. Such a rebellion would have forced the people of British blood in Cape Colony to throw in their lot with the Boers, and would probably also have forced Natal to join the combination.

It was by no means beyond the bounds of possibility that the Boers, merely blockading Ladysmith and Kimberley, and leaving a small force to observe Mafeking, might push on to the seaports, if only with a view to rousing the long-prepared rebellion. Such a course would be in the nature of a speculation, a speculation, however, with everything to gain and but little to lose.

By such a course the Boers would certainly gain an enormous accession of strength, and might, if entirely successful, add some hundred thousand men to the cause. In view of this possibility Great Britain sent an army of some seventy thousand men to the theatre of war.

So serious was the situation that this army, far from being in a position to deliver a decisive blow, found itself split up to relieve beleaguered towns

and to overawe the inhabitants. One or two repulses were sufficient to throw it on the defensive. These repulses at last roused the British nation. A heterogeneous army was raised by means of extraordinary shifts; a great wave of patriotism swept over the country, and volunteers volunteered.

Thereafter the Boers were overborne by weight of numbers; but being fighting men trained to the use of the horse and the rifle, operating in their own country they inflicted losses out of all proportion compared with their own on the, to a large extent, untrained masses brought against them.

All the reverses experienced, all the blood shed was due to the absence of all scientific preparation for war on the part of Great Britain, to the initial errors in peace strategy, and to the failure on the part of British statesmen to recognise that this war was inevitable.

In the Boer war Great Britain held undisputed command of the sea. For offensive operations her army was totally inadequate. She was forced to remain passively on the defensive until she could organise, arm, and train an army with which to take the offensive; and this against a comparatively untrained nation. From October, 1899, to January, 1900, she was forced to take this passive *rôle*.

The Boers, a small nation, failed to take advantage of Great Britain's helplessness through these months of inaction. Had the war been with a nation such as the French or the Germans, such an opportunity

as the Boers had would not have been allowed to slip. With a few more years granted for preparation and the study of the art of war, the Boers would—and this is a fact indisputable to all who have studied the art of war—have decisively defeated Great Britain.

The Illustration Afforded by China and Japan.

Before the Chinese-Japanese War, popular opinion in Great Britain believed that China, her dormant strength being so enormous, would have small difficulty in destroying in the long run her weak adversary. The annihilation of Japan was confidently predicted on all sides. Public opinion was, as usual, wrong.

Japan's state of complete readiness outmatched China's latent strength from the outset, and quickly threw the latter nation into a pitiful state of demoralisation and helplessness.

Great latent strength was shown in this war to be no match for careful preparation..

China's Emperor, statesmen, admirals, and generals were all entirely ignorant of military science. All were content to exist in the false security engendered by the knowledge of her innate strength, and that very remote contingency, war.

On the other hand, Japan compared to China was a small and a weak state. Having, however, given much time and thought to the consideration of military science and to the study of wars waged by

other nations, though having absolutely no previous personal experience, her whole strength was immediately available: in other words, she had prepared for war. She knew China's weakness, and from her study of military operations she knew that every day's delay from the moment when war became probable would tell in favour of China, as giving the latter time in which to develop her strength. Japan therefore forced on the war by the very simple expedient of destroying a Chinese transport.

Japan being prepared, her Government untrammelled by political opposition, her soldiers and sailors unhampered in the exercise of strategy (a science they had deeply studied), she was able to triumph over her adversary on the sea, though so far as material went, she was if anything the weaker of the two.

Her success at sea gave her the opportunity of employing her carefully prepared offensive weapon (her army) for decisive strokes at her unwieldy, unprepared, and effete adversary.

China, undisciplined, unorganised, and totally unprepared, fell an easy victim to her tiny but vigorous enemy, and was only saved by the intervention of other Powers.

CHAPTER IV

WAR STRATEGY AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Date of the Declaration of War—The Subordination of Strategical to Political Considerations—The Illustration afforded by the Boer War—The Illustration afforded by the War of Secession in America.

WE have so far seen the effect which a faulty preparation for war must have on the actual campaign, simply through the differences in strength and organisation of the armies engaged. We have seen that when a great military nation deliberately prepares for war, its triumph over an unprepared adversary is practically a foregone conclusion. We have seen a petty half-grown nation, which had partially prepared for war, strike with partial success at the greatest Empire the world has ever seen, but which was unprepared for war.

We shall now see that, but for the single strategical error of delaying the declaration of war till too late, caused by subordinating strategy to political considerations, that small half-grown nation would, in all human probability, have been entirely successful in her objects, and have brought about the complete downfall of her adversary; and this, notwithstanding

the enormous difference in the resources and strength of the two combatants.

Faulty preparation for war in addition to its immediate results, strategical and tactical, in the actual theatre of war, has also far-reaching moral results which affect the whole plan of campaign.

A nation which is unprepared for war is seldom entirely ignorant of the fact.

Certain soldiers, from time to time, endeavour to make their voices heard; or it may even be that the Press makes a half-hearted attempt to call public attention to the dangerous state of affairs.

This innate knowledge of weakness commonly finds expression periodically in a great national scare whenever there is danger of international complications. It also engenders fear, and consequent loss of moral courage, with all its attendant strategical mistakes, in the hearts of the leaders of the nation.

This loss of courage takes several forms, each of which leads to faulty strategy; and this, as has been shown in history, in most cases, leads to defeat.

These forms, which are usually termed "political considerations," are :—

1. Fear of becoming embroiled with a third Power, fear of the adversary, or desire for assistance.

2. A consequent desire to throw, at all costs, the onus of war on the adversary.

This in its turn leads to :—

3. Delay in the declaration of war when it is to the interest of a nation to force on the war.

4. Remaining on the defensive when the offensive is the correct strategical course.

THE ILLUSTRATION AFFORDED BY THE BOER WAR.

In August and September, 1899, before British reinforcements had arrived from India, the Boers were, in comparison with Great Britain, in a state of readiness for war.

The Transvaal and Free State could within about two weeks have put, roughly speaking, fifty thousand mounted men into the field. There is, moreover, small doubt but that they could have mobilised, and probably even have concentrated, without the fact coming to the knowledge of Great Britain; for Great Britain had shown herself extraordinarily lax in watching her neighbours. The majority of the population in Cape Colony is Dutch. Years of secret preparation and the Jameson Raid had brought this population into sympathy with their blood relations in the Transvaal and Free State. A considerable portion of the Natal population was also Dutch.

The British forces scattered through Cape Colony and Natal were, compared with the Boers, infinitesimal—some ten thousand men. The only reinforcements immediately available, in the case of a sudden invasion by the Boers, were a few thousand loyal, but entirely unorganised, colonials.

The war has shown that wherever the Boers have penetrated into Cape Colony, with the exception,

perhaps, of some small and isolated districts, a considerable number of the Dutch inhabitants have joined them. In some parts every able-bodied man has done so. And this, notwithstanding the fact that British troops had already occupied and annexed both the Free State and the Transvaal, and that the would-be rebels had been disarmed.

It is clear, therefore, that if at the commencement of the war the Boers had gained startling successes such as the capture of the coast ports, the great mass of the population in Cape Colony would have joined them. It is, in fact, notorious that the greater part of Cape Colony was prepared to rise on the first opportunity. In Natal the case was different. Here the great mass of the population was loyal; still, if successful, the Boers could well expect to gain many recruits.

The only real British reinforcements were those which would have to be brought oversea, and landed at the seaports. Let us suppose that these seaports had been captured by the Boers. The war would have developed into an invasion of South Africa by the British forces. Landings, on the open coast, by expeditionary British forces, with the object of capturing harbours as bases would have been necessary before decisive operations could have been undertaken. Taking into consideration the nature of the ironbound coast, the magnitude of the task will be clear.

It is certain that at least two months would have

elapsed after the capture of the seaports had been effected by the Boers before Great Britain could have recaptured a single port. It is probable that first attempts, having in view the new tactical methods of warfare adopted by the Boers, would have failed. During these two months it is safe to assume that about fifty thousand to sixty thousand Cape Colonists would have joined the Boers. It is, moreover, certain that the Government of Cape Colony would, if not of its own initiative, at least under slight compulsion, have declared for the Boers, receiving the rights of belligerency from foreign nations. The possession of the seaports by the Boers would have given extraordinary facility for the smuggling of contraband of war; it would have obliged Great Britain to blockade these ports, to have searched neutral vessels, and would have forced on her numerous international complications, probably resulting in war.

In place of an army of two hundred thousand men, Great Britain, before she could have seriously engaged in the re-conquest of South Africa, would have found it necessary to place an army of some five hundred thousand to a million men in the field.

It is doubtful whether the British people would have stood the strain on their resources, for such an army would have necessitated the hated universal service. It is the more probable that Great Britain would have relinquished the contest. The loss of Cape Colony would not only have brought Great Britain into contempt with all foreign nations, but also with

her own colonies. The British Colonies were an unknown factor; and from a strategic point of view, had not, it is evident, been fully considered either by the Dutch in South Africa, by foreign nations, or, needless to say, by Great Britain herself. It is probably the case that the loss of Cape Colony to the British Empire, would never have been forgiven by British Colonies; and that these young and vigorous nations would have seceded and started on their own account, rather than have formed a portion of an Empire which had shown itself so incapable of safe-guarding its own interests.

Had the Boers declared war in August, 1899, and executed a bold offensive with the seaports as objective, it is difficult to see how their complete success could have been prevented.

It must be clear, therefore that in the possession of the seaports lay the key to the situation.

The Boers had prepared this war, and had presumably thought out the strategical situation; it must have been clear to them that their great hope of success lay in a sudden, unexpected, and rapid invasion of British territory with a view to the capture, at all costs, of the seaports. An almost certain hope of success lay before them, provided they could conduct the operation with secrecy, rapidity, and surprise. Success would almost certainly mean the disintegration of the British Empire.

Such being the case, it was obviously the duty of Presidents Kruger and Steyn, the moment the war

became inevitable, and Great Britain awakened to the fact, to force on the war as rapidly as possible, and to immediately take the offensive, whilst Great Britain was still hopelessly unprepared and helpless.

Had the Boer generals been the men they became after two years' experience of war, had they been untrammelled in the execution of their plans, there is no doubt but that they would have successfully driven the British from South Africa.

Looking at it from the Boer point of view, no further *casus belli* was required by the Dutch republics. Great Britain's interference in the internal affairs of the Transvaal, and her claim to suzerainty, formed a sufficient reason. Sufficient reasons are, indeed, always forthcoming. A simple declaration of independence on the part of the Boers would have precipitated the crisis; and having regard to the Jameson Raid, there was but little fear of want of the world's sympathy. Against this course must be put the fear that the Orange Free State would not have joined; but in view of the war preparations that had been made in both these states, the good understanding that had for some considerable time existed between the two Governments, there can be no doubt but that the Free State would have supported the Transvaal in any course of action she might have thought fit to adopt. As for the Dutch population in Cape Colony, how should they have stood aloof when their blood-relations had overrun the colony?

As regards their incomplete preparation, every day's delay would enable Great Britain, with her vast resources, to more than equalise the position and to develop her enormous strength. An early declaration, once war was inevitable—that is, from the moment Great Britain grasped the fact and commenced to prepare—was all in favour of the Boers. Every moment's delay, on the other hand, Great Britain being awakened, was fatal to the Boers.

Let us make this point clear.

The Boers had been strenuously preparing for war, but in July and August, 1899, were not fully prepared. Provided Great Britain made no effort at preparation, the proper strategical course for the Boers to adopt was to delay the war while perfecting their own arrangements. The moment, however, that Great Britain commenced to make preparations, no matter in how small a degree, it would become obvious that she had awakened to the fact that war was inevitable, and her enormous resources would enable her to quickly overtake the Boer preparations. In such a case every day's delay would be fatal to the Boers. In short, while Great Britain slept, the correct strategical course on the part of the Boers was to delay the war until such time as they, having completed their preparations, should be able to strike with decisive effect. Great Britain once awakened, however, strategy demanded an immediate declaration of war, in order to take full advantage of their superior preparedness; and under no circumstances whatsoever

should Great Britain have been permitted to commence the preparation, either in England or in India, of a force for South Africa without an immediate declaration of war.

Thus up to a certain point the Boers should have delayed war; after that point they should, at all costs, have forced on the war, no matter even though they commenced hostilities before their full force was available.

The date of the declaration of war is a purely strategical question, one into which the side-issues of political considerations should, under no circumstances, be permitted to enter. It is a matter of such grave moment; it spells the difference between victory and defeat. The trained strategist alone should be trusted with the destiny of a nation at such a time.

The leaders of the republics must have fully appreciated the state of affairs, and their hesitation to declare and commence war could only have been due to four things:—

1. The hesitation, from moral motives, of the Presidents to plunge their country into what might turn out to be a disastrous war.
2. Unpreparedness.
3. A desire for sympathy and assistance.
4. Ignorance.

Hesitation to plunge a country into war, when the existence of the nation depends on the promptitude with which war is declared, is due to two causes:—

1. Actual fear of defeat.
2. Lack of moral courage on the part of the head of the state lest his name be handed down to posterity as that of a great criminal who had plunged two nations into an unnecessary war.

Fear of defeat, or at least the display of fear, is out of place in a statesman whose country is passing through a great crisis. The other cause, lack of moral courage, is in itself a crime; for it consists in subordinating national to personal interests.

The two Presidents do not appear, notwithstanding their assertions that they desired peace, to have feared the moral responsibility of plunging two nations into war.

It is almost certain that the desire for outside sympathy and assistance, due to misplaced fear of defeat, together with a complete ignorance or disregard of the requirements of strategy, was the motive which caused the two Presidents to delay the declaration of war.

The substance in the shape of sound strategy was cast aside for the shadow in the shape of, so-called, political considerations.

The Boers hesitated to commence hostilities when they might have done so with almost a certainty of success; such certainty, indeed, that perhaps no nation that has ever gone to war has been able to do so with such high hopes of victory.

The Boers, in order to gain the sympathy, and, possibly, even the active support of foreign nations,

delayed till their chance had gone for ever. They started with the rights of belligerency; they even for a time, after their early successes, gained the enthusiastic sympathy of the whole world, and much good it has done them. But no active co-operation! Their successes were not sufficiently decisive to obtain that! Sympathy is all very well, it costs nothing; but active co-operation may be dangerous. European nations do not now go to war on the spur of the moment and out of sympathy.

A nation which would obtain assistance, has, first by its success to bring the end clearly in view; to show that much may be gained, and little can be lost, by rendering assistance. Not quite so weak, however, as the Southerners in the American War of Secession, the Boers did not hesitate to take the offensive. Puerile indeed would they have been had they done so; unworthy of the rights of belligerency, or of any meed of sympathy. To make war when completely ignorant of the science of war is childish and contemptible; it is like the baby that puts his finger into the fire, unaware that it will be burnt.

Though the Boers did not commit such a gross strategical mistake as to refuse to take the offensive, yet their failure to declare war and to take the offensive before they did was a sufficiently serious error, and dearly have they paid for it. To say that they were unready to act before they did is to say that they were unprepared for war, and that is no excuse in these days. Certainly no excuse as

far as the Boers were concerned, for they had had many years in which to prepare, for what they all apparently considered to be an inevitable war, with the most blind of all possible adversaries to deal with, and, moreover, an adversary which believed its hands tied by the Jameson Raid. There is no excuse for the Boers; it was simply ignorance of strategy and want of thought; and, possibly, lack of courage. Truly, they have paid a heavy penalty for their great mistake. In place of being masters of South Africa, in place of having raised themselves to a position in the world, a position such that any future was possible, in place of having broken the power of the Mistress of the Seas, of having delivered the first blow which in the end should bring the unwieldy Colossus tumbling down to earth, in place of immortal fame as the destroyer of Great Britain and of the hopes of the British Empire, they have become a thing of the past—a paragraph in history. Their cattle taken, their homes destroyed, their towns in the possession of strangers, they have nothing to hope for but to become citizens of a nation they hate, or, later on, to make a last despairing and hopeless effort to rise on their thoroughly aroused conquerors—a hopeless effort indeed if their conquerors are true to themselves.

And such is the punishment which has been brought upon the Boer nation by its rulers. There is no reason to suppose that this punishment was brought on them for their so-called crime in attempt-

ing to drive the English from South Africa; or, as the lower class Boer appears to think, a heavenly retribution for former crimes; but simply because they failed to follow the dictates of true strategy and to act boldly, as became men, knowing their objects and determined to achieve them. "God marches with big battalions"—with big battalions well trained and organised, and directed by correct strategy and tactics.

Truly, Fate punishes heavily, and for strategical crimes she exacts the heaviest penalty of all.

The two Presidents deliberately threw away their strongest weapon—that of superior readiness for war—in order to gain the useless sympathy of foreign nations. They failed to recognise the fact that sympathy follows success in this selfish world of ours, and that mere sympathy without active co-operation is of little value.

Success breeds sympathy; failure breeds contempt. Strength in a nation as in a man is loved or hated, but is, at all events, feared; weakness in a nation, as in a man, rouses contempt alone.* If a belligerent would gain the sympathies of other nations, its best means are by its success to demonstrate that it might be dangerous to other states to display aught but sympathy.

* Machiavelli writes:—"It has been sometimes asked whether it is better to be loved than feared; to which I answer, that one should wish to be both. But as that is a hard matter to accomplish, I think, if it is necessary to make a selection, that it is safer to be feared than loved." ("The Prince," Bohn's Library.)

The Illustration Afforded by the War of Secession.

It will be remembered that the war in reality arose on the slavery question. The Southern States, whose wealth, nay, whose existence, depended on agricultural industries, required a large population with which to carry on the large amount of labour involved in these industries. Portions of the country at certain periods of the year are too hot for white labour. The country was, moreover, but sparsely populated with white men. Thus the black population practically supplied the labour market. The withdrawal of the slave population from the labour market—a withdrawal which was certain to take place on the abrogation of slavery, for the black races will not work unless obliged to do so—or the expenditure that would be required as payment to induce the lazy black to work, meant, such was the local opinion of the day, ruin to these Southern States.

The Northern States, on the contrary, were dependent for existence on manufacture and commerce. They employed but few slaves compared with the numbers employed in the South; and the sudden disappearance of the black population from the labour market would not materially affect their welfare. They could thus afford to be philanthropic. Into the rights and the wrongs of the question it is unnecessary to enter; but attention must be

drawn to the different conditions under which the two adversaries took the field. The Southerners, country-bred, inured to an open-air life in all seasons, accustomed to the saddle and to sport, actuated by a high sense of patriotism, formed ideal material of which to make soldiers. Each individual man had learnt self-reliance and self-resource from the ordinary conditions under which he spent his life. In a word, they were the Boers over again. Such men are formed by the conditions of existence to take their place in the ranks of an army, and require but good and trained officers and a little stern discipline to become good soldiers.

The Northerners, on the other hand, were for the greater part city-bred, as all manufacturing nations must be. Inured, possibly, to hard work on the wharves and in the manufacturing centres, outnumbering the Southerners in a large proportion, richer beyond all comparison than the South, they yet individually could not compare with the Southerners as material for soldiers. It was obvious that under such conditions the Southerners could the more rapidly put an army in the field, and that that army would the more quickly become efficient.

This, where both were unprepared, constituted in some sort a preparedness for war in which the Southerners far outstripped their Northern adversaries. But the Northerners were the richer and the more numerous; in other words, had the greater staying power. Time alone was required in which

to develop their resources; and if this time were obtained, the issue of the struggle, however prolonged it might be, was beyond doubt. True strategy required that from the moment war became inevitable the Southerners should mobilise every available man, horse, and gun; and, taking the offensive against Washington, the northern seat of Government, interrupt the Northern mobilisation, bring Maryland, which was well disposed to the South, into line; and by their energy defeat the Northern States before they could prepare.

Northern strategy, on the other hand, required secret preparation, while diplomacy delayed the outbreak of hostilities by every means in its power.

What actually occurred? The Northern States, making little or no preparation for war, attempted to occupy a Southern fortress. Their troops were fired on; and this brought about the outbreak of hostilities. The Northerners, by this strategical error, had put themselves into the power of their antagonists; but their antagonists failed to see their advantage, or, if their generals saw it, they allowed themselves to be over-ruled by political considerations.

The fact that the South had fired on the Northern troops had practically made war inevitable, and nothing was to be gained by the South in delaying hostilities, while everything — victory — was to be gained by an immediate commencement of the war and the assumption of the offensive against Washington.

" Political considerations, however, intervened. The South, being unable to come to terms with the North on the slavery question, had expressed her determination to secede from the Union. The North had refused to permit this; and this was the actual point on which war was declared.

Now the South, not being a manufacturing nation, and depending for her wealth on her exports of sugar and cotton to European markets; depending, moreover, on those markets for her munitions of war, had been placed in the position of a rebel. As a rebel it became a breach of neutrality for foreign nations to supply her with any contraband of war; while the North was in no such position. Were the South considered, however, as a power separate to the North, and accorded the rights of belligerency, the case would be different, for although it would still be a breach of neutrality for a foreigner to supply her with contraband of war, yet it would also be a breach of neutrality for that foreign nation to supply the North with similar goods.

On this point strategy and political considerations were antagonistic. On the one hand, were strategical requirements followed, a fair hope of early success presented itself. There was no knowing where such success would stop; it might lead to the speedy defeat of the North and the complete triumph of the South. In any case a considerable accession of strength might be confidently hoped for. Diplomacy —not peace strategy, be it noted—with its political

considerations, demanded another course. The whole civilised world must be shown that the South were not the aggressors in the war, with a view, partly, to obtaining recognition as a belligerent, and, partly, to enlisting the sympathy of foreign nations and of those persons in the Southern States who were averse to war.*

A declaration of war, followed by an offensive into Northern territory, would give the lie to all protestations, and no man would believe but that the South had deliberately engineered the war. It was, therefore, in the view of politicians, so important to gain the rights of belligerency, that no course of action whatsoever, that might lead the world to consider that the South were the aggressors, could under any circumstances be adopted. Strategy, on the other hand, demanded that the enemy should be attacked and defeated at all costs and as speedily as possible, and that no considerations should be permitted to interfere with this object. The defeat of the North would quickly obtain the rights of belligerency for the South; but the rights of belligerency would by no means cause the defeat of

* It is, needless to say, an essential to success that the whole people should be of one mind before war is undertaken; but the dictates of strategy must not be disregarded on account of the outcry of a certain section of the populace. A mere state of war is calculated to rouse the patriotism and enthusiasm of a nation at large, and thus to eliminate the disadvantage of disunion. Faulty strategy, on the other hand, once committed can never be entirely rectified; and its results will be apparent throughout the whole war.

the North. Political considerations triumphed, and strategical were put on one side.

The South, though at first successful in defending herself, was never accorded the rights of belligerency. Her preliminary successes were not sufficiently decisive.

Even after war was declared this pernicious political view was still permitted to influence strategy. The Southerners still had the opportunity for a bold offensive against Washington. The mere approach of Southern troops to the frontier towards Washington caused such a scare, both amongst politicians and populace, as to show clearly what great results might be anticipated from a successful blow against Washington.

Political considerations, however, still refused to permit the proper strategical course to be adopted, lest the sympathy of foreign nations and the rights of belligerency be refused.

The result of this faulty strategy on the part of the Southern States was that the North was given time in which to prepare, to arm, and to take measures for the defence of Washington. Once armed, the overwhelming strength of the North asserted itself, and the Southern States were invaded in force.

The Northern armies were again and again called back from their advance upon Richmond, the Southern capital, by a threat against Washington; but the opportunity for striking a decisive blow against the North had gone for ever.

The display of fine strategy and tactics on the part of the Southern generals, of magnificent leadership on the part of the subordinate officers, and of the utmost gallantry on the part of the men failed entirely to compensate for the great initial mistake of failure to seize the opportunity.

The lack of courage on the part of the Southern statesmen, the pitiable fear of defeat, and the consequent desire to obtain assistance at all costs, instead of boldly carrying out the best possible strategical course, was, so far as human knowledge can discern, the direct cause of the invasion of the Southern States, of all the consequent misery experienced during four years by the inhabitants, in their hopeless struggle against overwhelming numbers and resources, and of their ultimate defeat. A heavy penalty.

And this is the penalty which the Government of a country brings upon its own people by the subordination of strategy to political considerations.

A man is taken at his own valuation, and so also is a nation. A man who displays fear of what he is about to undertake will never be believed in by his brothers, and so also a nation. Calm and steadfast determination will make its weight felt throughout the world, To "hedge" for fear of failure shows weakness. To show weakness at the commencement of war is not the way to win success, neither is it the way to gain either active assistance, mere sympathy, or the rights of belligerency; to gain either it is necessary

for a nation to show itself worthy of the boon. How can it do so better than by winning success? Rebels who show that they know themselves to be rebels, who are determined, yet afraid, will never instil confidence into other nations. Human nature loves and fears the aggressive man; it has only contempt for the patient man. A show of energy and a succession of brilliant triumphs in Northern territory would quickly have gained sympathy and active assistance for the Southerners. But they showed by their hesitation to commence the war by a bold offensive, a want of confidence in themselves, a consciousness that they were rebels. Was it likely that foreign nations, which might afterwards be called to account, would venture on supporting a party that had no confidence in itself?

If it is found at the time when strategy demands that operations should commence that diplomacy has failed in its work of obtaining allies, or of seducing a possible enemy from its allegiance to the adversary, the fact must be faced; but on no account may strategical demands be put aside. If, moreover, a nation has shown want of foresight in the failure to recognise her possible adversary, the fact must again be faced; and more than ever must strategical demands be complied with, in order that strategy may use its best efforts to overcome the terrible consequence of unreadiness for war. To attempt to evade a war for which the nation is unready is the worst course of all, for it tells the adversary the state of affairs;

and there is no nation in the world, with the exception, perhaps, of Great Britain herself, who would have the magnanimity and chivalry, or rather stupidity—who, indeed, could afford the magnanimity, chivalry, and stupidity—to refrain from taking advantage of her enemy's obvious weakness. Great Britain and the British Empire can no longer afford to display magnanimity, chivalry, or stupidity.

Strategy is the foundation on which the edifice of the campaign is built up; one slight flaw in this foundation and the edifice may fall to pieces. However, great may be the desire of statesmen to steer clear of war, however intense must always be their desire to avoid it, still it must be remembered that failure to recognise the fact that it is inevitable till it is too late, leads to lack of preparation and faulty strategy, and that such faulty strategy may, and probably will, lead the nation to defeat and ruin. Truly an awful responsibility.

Up to a certain point it is right and proper to use the utmost endeavour to avoid war, but beyond that point lies danger of defeat. The question must rise in the mind of the responsible statesman, and it must rest with him, either to take the responsibility of plunging his nation into war in good time, and at his country's convenience, in order to ensure at least a good chance of ultimate victory; or, being afraid of the responsibility, to endeavour to avoid the war, thereby giving his adversary time, and risking the defeat of his country.

Readiness for war is the strongest weapon in the armoury of a nation, and if a nation be prepared, its adversary being unprepared, to give that adversary time in which to prepare is to cast away the probability of victory, to cast away, as it were, a modern weapon and take to the bow and arrow. Truly no small responsibility, and one that weighs as heavily in the balance as that of plunging a nation into a possibly avoidable war; yet the former is a responsibility which has constantly been unknowingly accepted by many a statesman with resulting defeat. The man untrained in strategy will easily recognise the latter responsibility, but will naturally find it difficult to appreciate the former at its full value.

Moltke, being a strategist, was able to appreciate the advantage that his readiness for war gave Prussia over Austria in 1866; and knowing how great this advantage was, was able to give the King time in which to make efforts to avoid the war altogether.

Bismarck, a soldier as well as a statesman, a man, moreover, but little troubled by fear of responsibility, was able to appreciate the value of readiness and the importance of striking the first blow.

Mark Twain tells us:

> Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just,
> But four times he who gets his blow in first.

In war there is far more truth in the latter half of the couplet than in the former. War in former days was an art; it is to-day as much a science as an art.

Though there are certain immutable principles of strategy, principles which have been common to every war, whether between barbarians or between civilised nations, and whether on sea or land, since the world began, yet each war shows its own distinctive features, according to the nature of the country which forms the theatre of war, the type of man, or the type of weapon in use.

It is for preparation to so model the machine, and to bring it to a state of such perfection, as will leave war strategy, the most difficult art in the world, the simplest possible task. It must therefore make its arrangements, having particular regard to the war which is inevitable; and it is for peace strategy to clearly recognise the enemy or enemies that will have to be dealt with, and to foresee and lay down the several distinctive features of that war.

Offensive strategy seizes the initiative and attacks; defensive strategy permits the adversary to seize the initiative and defends itself.

The initiative holds the power of surprise, for it acts as it thinks fit and forces the adversary to conform. Preparation for war can hardly be efficient unless based upon offensive peace strategy.

Preparation for war must march hand-in-hand with peace strategy—the two are indissolubly bound together—and they both culminate in the delivery of the blow—that is, on the date of the declaration of war.

PART II

FORM OF GOVERNMENT AND WAR

CHAPTER V

THE LEADERSHIP OF A NATION

The different Forms of Government—The new Form of Government.

IT can hardly be denied that the true object of government, that is of leadership, is to obtain the greatest possible comfort for the many compatible with the security of the whole. The security of the whole will depend, sooner or later, on success in war; while the comfort of the many depends on the rate of wages and the value of food, which, in their turn, depend on the success of the nation in trade, commerce, agriculture, and manufacture. But defeat in war is disastrous to trade, commerce, agriculture, and manufacture, and for that reason alone must ensure the greater discomfort of the many. Hence it is that defeat in war is, from every point of view, the greatest disaster that can befall a nation.

The questions with which a government must deal may therefore be divided into two classes, primary and secondary; primary, those relating to success in war; secondary, those concerning domestic matters.

In the science of strategy it has been clearly laid down and proved by all the greatest soldiers in history that secondary considerations must be disregarded in favour of primary. In the struggle for existence a nation is, or should be, a vast militant machine, which depends for success even as does an army or navy, on its organisation, discipline, readiness, and, above all, leadership. If, in the leadership of a nation, secondary considerations are given precedence of primary, failure and defeat, though possibly long delayed, will in the end be experienced.

Thus the first object of any government should be to ensure the security of the nation, that is, to ensure success in war.*

It has been said that the leadership of an army is the most difficult of all arts; and it can hardly be gainsaid that the leadership of a nation must be a problem of far greater magnitude and complexity. Bad generalship of an army, whether it be due to division of control, to lack of education in the art of war, to lack of self-confidence, to lack of ability, or to fear, is, no matter how sturdy may be the devotion of subordinates, no matter how brilliant their abilities, utterly disastrous; how much more must this be the case with a nation? A nation,

* Machiavelli tells us: "Princes ought, therefore, to make the art of war their sole study and occupation, for it is peculiarly the science of those who govern. War, and the several sorts of discipline and institutions relative to it, should be their only study, the only profession they should follow, and the object they ought always to have in view." ("The Prince.")

like the armed forces, must, if success would be achieved, be wielded on scientific strategical principles; and the attainment of victory inexorably demands that the whole attention of the leader be given up to the constant study of the situation, to the constant effort to forecast and prepare for the future, his whole energies directed to dealing with main essentials. The finger of genius alone can, without previous thought, in every case, unerringly touch the essential point; but it is fatuity on the part of a nation to trust its hopes of success to the fortuitous rise of a genius at the critical moment; and moreover it is doubtful that even genius will in modern times be able to rectify the errors which must inevitably result from faulty peace strategy and absence of preparation.

Good leadership of a nation, that is, a form of government suitable to the conduct of war, is the first essential to success; without it a nation must, in the end, suffer defeat and come to utter ruin.

* * * * * *

Forms of government may be classified as the following:—

1. Autocratic government.
2. Military despotism.
3. National military despotism combined with representative government.
4. Representative government.
5. Mob government.

Autocratic and mob government are the two extremes.

Military despotism is closely allied to the autocratic; while the representative is closely allied to mob government.

The government of a country, which has adopted universal service is practically a national military despotism combined with representative government, and is, it would appear, the most moderate form.

Autocratic government is the form usually found amongst barbarian races. As those races become civilised so their form of government changes. As the pendulum swings from extreme to extreme, gradually becoming stationary in the centre, so, it would seem, does the form of government of a nation change.

Autocratic government is usually displaced by the violent upheaval of the mob; the hopelessness of mob government quickly becomes apparent, sometimes even to the mob itself, but at all events to the soldiers of the nation; and the pendulum again swings back to military despotism.

We have examples in the French Revolution and in the Civil Wars in England in the time of Charles I.

In peace, the comfort, happiness, personal safety, and complete freedom of the individual—that is, the secondary considerations in the struggle for existence—are the points which seem of the more importance to the people of a nation, and therefore those with a view to which the government should be estab-

lished. But in war the comfort of the individual, and it may be, indeed, all domestic questions, must give way to the primary consideration, the great question of national security, or defeat must result; and a nation is ever at war.

It is necessary to make an effort to grasp what representative government means; in order that we may form a clear conception as to the manner in which peace strategy, preparation for war, as well as the actual operations of war, are thereby affected.

The people of the country choose their own representatives; and these in their turn, select their leaders. From amongst these leaders, a certain number form the governing body of the country, and this body is termed the Ministry, the Cabinet, or the Government.

The representatives of the people are those men who, being well endowed with brains or with this world's goods—necessarily the latter—come forward for selection by the vote of the people. There are always many such candidates competing against one another, who generally hold, or pretend to hold, diametrically opposite views on all subjects, each candidate reflecting, more or less, the views of his constituents.

It will thus easily be seen that a representative of the people must of necessity support the views of his constituents—whether right or wrong—as otherwise he is liable, at the next election, to lose his position as one of the legislators of his country.

Similarly, members of the Cabinet must reflect the views of their supporters, as otherwise they are liable to lose the assistance of those supporters, to embarrass the Ministry, and to lose their own positions. Members of the Ministry are, moreover, practically pledged, except under very grave circumstances, to support one another; lest the whole, weakened by the secession of one or more of its members who carry their supporters with them, be out-voted by those who hold diametrically opposite views—the Opposition—and thus be forced to resign their position.

There is thus in constant progress an internecine struggle between those sections of the representatives which hold diametrically opposite views, that is, the Government and the Opposition; the Opposition constantly endeavouring to thrust the Government from its position; the Government endeavouring to, at all costs, retain its position.

In addition to these two main sections, there may be, and generally are, others holding peculiar opinions on any matter, not necessarily of importance, which bring them into conflict with each of the two main sections, and with each other.

When the Government party, the Opposition, or even a third party, are any way equal in numbers, the struggle between them rises to such a pitch of vehemence as to leave but little time for the conduct of national business. The proper government of a country under such circumstances must be a difficult, if not an impossible operation; and it is obvious that

national interests must constantly be either entirely disregarded, or subordinated to the petty interests of the different political parties. These political struggles, in fact, attain, after a few generations of representative government, an entirely unreasonable and undue importance in the thoughts of a nation, even to the exclusion of all questions of national interest. Individual representatives are constantly tempted by party exigencies to support measures which they know to be bad. Men destined for a parliamentary career are taught, apparently, from youth upwards, the tactics and trickery necessary for success in the political arena; while the study of great national questions is by no means necessary to ensure such success. The study of war, and the means by which success in war may be attained, is still less considered necessary for men ambitious to shine in political strife. The population of the country quickly becomes imbued with the same principles. Soldiers and sailors are, with but few exceptions, not permitted to vote; war, in all its phases, is therefore disregarded in all political questions. The great mass of thinking men and women quickly become conversant with every phase of political life; but are entirely ignorant of what must always be the most important of all national questions—that of war. And yet the policy of a government, in war as in peace, is practically directed and controlled by the opinion of the majority of the populace, the opinions of soldiers and sailors, who might naturally

be supposed to make war their chief study, being entirely eliminated.

In short, representative government may be said to be government by the civil populace; the actual rulers of the nation fear, and are in fact unable, to direct the policy of the nation into its true channel, unless the consent of the populace has first been obtained. The rulers of the nation are, in fact, swayed and directed by public opinion.

Autocratic government is the opposite extreme to the representative form. It is usually a military despotism, inasmuch as the autocrat is either a soldier, or depends on his soldiers to maintain him in position.

The will of a single man, or it may be a woman, directs absolutely all public policy whether in peace or war. The opinion of the populace goes for naught; and it is, indeed, usually the case that the populace has little or no opinion, or, if such opinion exists, that it is carefully suppressed. Such autocratic governments are usually military powers, and internal questions relating to the happiness and comfort of the people are naturally subordinated to questions of war.

There is a third form of government, which would seem to be the mean between autocratic and representative government.

It is the government enjoyed by "nations in arms"; that is, by those nations which have adopted the principle of universal service, either as soldiers or as sailors.

Where a whole nation from the highest to the lowest are soldiers and sailors, there can be no question of military despotism and the undue subordination of questions of public comfort to military questions; and, on the other hand, neither can there be any question of the subordination of military questions, on which the safety or even the existence of the nation may depend, to unimportant and trivial questions of party politics or of popular comfort.

To put it shortly, universal service means autocratic government in all primary questions or those relating to war and the struggle for existence, and representative government on all secondary matters on which the comfort of the people depends.

From the mere fact that every able-bodied man has been a soldier or a sailor, it is evident that public opinion must be, to a certain extent, educated on military matters—capable of forming a true estimate of the necessities of success in war, and well able to judge of the direful results which must arise from neglect of these necessities.

Public opinion, in a nation trained to arms and taught discipline, is in itself disciplined. It recognises the necessity of trusting its leaders to do their duty in an emergency without interference. It is, in fact, swayed and directed by its rulers into the proper channel.

Autocratic government is in modern times fast disappearing from the world.

The Anglo-Saxon nations were the first to discard it.

From their strategical positions in the world, a great struggle for existence was an improbable contingency, and military questions were, somewhat naturally, subordinated to questions of public comfort or morality and to questions of commerce.

Continental nations, however, to whom a struggle for existence is at any time a by no means remote contingency, and who, through experience, have recognised that a few years' disregard of warlike preparation will plunge them into such a struggle, have feared to go to the lengths of the Anglo-Saxon nations and to set up a government which in itself is apparently sufficient to ensure defeat. They have, therefore, under force of circumstances been obliged to adopt a moderate form of government together with universal service.

That the purely representative form of government is in itself sufficient to ensure defeat in a struggle for existence when opposed to a nation with an autocratic or moderate form of government, combined with universal service, is no mere figure of speech, but appears to be an undoubted fact.

It should be noted that in Canada, to whom a struggle for existence is a very real contingency, a modified form of universal service has already been adopted; while elementary steps in the same direction have, since the Boer war, been adopted in Natal.

The late Dreyfus case was an example of a

struggle between a representative form of government and a national military despotism.

French soldiers recognised the absolute necessity of putting a stop at all costs to the danger of a disclosure of their secret plans to possible enemies. Civilians, unable to grasp this necessity, considered only the possibility of doing gross injustice to an individual.

On the one hand, fear for the national safety was the motive power; on the other, fear for the liberty of the subject.

And these are the two points on which soldier and civilian must invariably come into contest.

CHAPTER VI

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT AND PEACE STRATEGY

Great Britain in South Africa—Great Britain in Europe—Great Britain on the Frontier of India.

Great Britain's Peace Strategy in South Africa.

WHEN Cape Town became a British dependency, at the commencement of the nineteenth century, the colonists consisted of a mixture of Dutch, French, German, and British blood, each nationality speaking its own language. Dutch blood predominated, however, and in the course of time the Dutch and English languages became the more generally spoken, English being the official language of the country. Up to 1830 the principle adopted by Great Britain towards the colony was to permit the country to work out its own salvation. Kaffir wars were of constant occurrence, and the Kaffir question, that is, the subordination of the black to the white races, was the principal and most important question in South Africa. The solution of this question would,

in fact, determine whether the white races in South Africa should continue to exist, or whether the country should be given over to black supremacy and barbarism. To the white man in Cape Colony, the white man who lived in constant touch with and fear of the black man, the latter was but little removed from an animal—a dangerous animal. When sufficiently tamed he could be employed as a beast of burden; if untamable he should be killed.

It was in the early thirties that a great wave of sentimental admiration and affection for the "black brother" spread throughout Great Britain. The people of England, having seldom if ever seen a black man, were nevertheless convinced that there was good in him: that, in fact, he possessed a soul to be saved. A crusade against slavery was undertaken, the immediate result being (1834) the emancipation of slaves in Cape Colony. The means by which the emancipation was carried out, apparently by direct orders from England, and in direct opposition to the opinion of the Governor on the spot, were such as to ruin a large number of colonists, and to alienate the affections of almost all from British rule.

Peace strategy demanded that this young and thriving community should be identified with Great Britain: that those colonists of foreign extraction should be made Britishers, whether with their will or against their will; and that, in short, Cape Colony with, as should have been apparent even in those

days, a great future before it, should be the cradle of a future British race which should assist, defend, and renew the life of the old Mother Country when the time of the latter had come. As a means to this end, it must be obvious that the colonists should have been supported in every way possible: that their interests, and even their supposed interests, should have been religiously safeguarded, and that they should be brought to look upon Great Britain as a mother in fact, and not as a stepmother. The emancipation of the slaves in Cape Colony, except with the full consent of the colonists themselves, was a strategical fault. What mattered it that black men were slaves? What mattered it that the incorrigible black tribes on the frontier—tribes given to every description of atrocity — were destroyed? What mattered it even if the country were denuded of black men, provided the white race grew up in love and reverence for the Mother Country? But no; the British people were seized with one of their insane fads; the black man was a brother, and must be raised to an equality with the white races. From a strategical point of view the manner in which the slaves were emancipated was sufficiently bad, but worse was to follow.

In 1834 the sixth Kaffir war broke out, the Kaffirs being the deliberate aggressors. A prolonged struggle ensued, in which the colonists, assisted by the available British troops, ultimately gained the victory. In 1835, at the termination of this war, in

the peace negotiations, Great Britain, the Mother Country, in pursuit of her fad, actually sided with the black savages against her own loyal colonists. As Mr. Worsfield in his "History of South Africa" writes:—

"In short, it was made abundantly plain that the sympathies of His Majesty's Government were entirely on the side of the Kaffirs, and that the colonists—the men whose homes had been ruined, and whose cattle had been carried off—were suspected of having provoked the war for their own purposes."*

These colonists, partly of British, partly of Dutch blood, were at that period thoroughly loyal to the British nation, and the action adopted by the Imperial Government can only be termed an indelible disgrace to the British nation.

Here was the first great cause of ill blood between Great Britain and the colonists. The more bitter, shaking the dust from their feet, left their homes to found a new home elsewhere, where they should at the least be free from British interference, and able to settle their vital differences with their black enemies according to their own vigorous methods. Thus was

* "A History of South Africa," by W. Basil Worsfield, p. 68. See also Theal's "History of South Africa." It is interesting to compare the action of the Imperial Cabinet at this period with its action in 1899. In 1835 it sided with the lowest of savages against its own loyal colonists and the governor of the colony. The savages were the enemy, and the British Government apparently feared to hurt the feelings of that enemy. In 1899, in the Boer war, the British Government, though hard pushed to it for troops, refrained from employing troops from the native army of India, apparently lest such a course should hurt the enemy's feelings.

the seed of hatred sown in South Africa. It was not the emancipation of the slaves, which was apparently recognised by the colonists in its true light as a foolish and mistaken, but at the least a kindly sentimental act on the part of Great Britain, a measure which did justice to the heart if not to the head of the British people. It was the cruel and most unnatural act of the British Mother Country in assisting the barbarous and bitter enemies of her children against those children themselves, which sowed this seed of hatred which should, under the fostering hand of Great Britain, flourish in the near future into an exceeding great tree.

Again, in 1842, in Natal did the British side with Kaffirs against the Boers, driving the latter from Natal and taking the country. Such a course was, in this instance, correct strategy; for these Boers, members of "the great trek" of 1834, were, at that time, declared enemies.

In 1854, both in Cape Colony and north of the Orange River, in what is now the Orange River Colony, did the British take sides with the Kaffir against the colonist.

The policy of Great Britain was, in the thirties and forties, directed to the establishment of powerful native states, such as the Kosas in Eastern Cape Colony, the Basutos, and the Griquas. It is difficult to grasp on what train of reasoning such a principle of action could have been adopted. It was almost certainly due to the desire of the Home Government

to avoid the fresh responsibilities which must of necessity be born with the expansion of British Colonies. The establishment of powerful native states, on the borders of the colony, would confine expansion, and could only be detrimental to the interests of the colonists. But it would, on the other hand, limit responsibility, and grant British legislators in England more time for the consideration of what was to them the most important of all duties, that of studying the political situation in England.

The arrival of Sir H. Smith (1847), the soldier, as Governor, of necessity altered Great Britain's policy in South Africa. He, trained in a soldier's school, taught in the school of war, real war, under Wellington in the Peninsula, to grasp essentials and to consider the good of his country, looking at the native question from the point of view of a man of common sense, and not from that of a faddist, recognising apparently that the black man was not so much a brother as an enemy, supported the colonists in their struggles with the Kaffirs. He did more; he endeavoured to undo the work of the British Government and to reduce the power of the native states, which, through the strategically false policy of Great Britain, had been fostered by the British nation, and had become a menace to the colony. His authority, being set at naught by the Basutos, he attacked them and was repulsed. Being simultaneously attacked by the Kosas in Cape Colony, he found himself too weak to deal with both, and was

forced to leave the colonists north of the Orange River to their own devices, while he turned his full attention to the Kosas. A reinforcement of a few thousand British troops would have, at that time, been ample with which to have settled the whole vexed question in South Africa; but then, as ever, the British army was all too weak to guard the interests of Great Britain.

The outcome was a treaty entered into by the Free Staters with the Basutos, combined apparently with much bitterness of feeling against the British, and the recognition of the Boers north of the Vaal as an independent state.

The Free Staters now refused to recognise the supremacy of Great Britain, and were attacked and defeated by Sir H. Smith at Boomplatz; the country between the Orange and Vaal Rivers thus definitely becoming British territory. A considerable section of Free Staters had become entirely content with the new order of things, when, in 1854, the Crimean War broke out. Great Britain, too weak through lack of armed forces to engage in war with an European nation, and, at the same time, to guard her interests in South Africa, or, more probably, her Government too fully employed, what with party politics and the war in the Crimea, to give thought to her interests in South Africa, withdrew all pretentions to the control of the Orange Free State, withdrew her troops, even against the will of a portion of the Free Staters themselves.

II

Thus we see the birth of two independent and inimical states in South Africa, entirely due to the faulty peace strategy of Great Britain, in that she had adopted the strategically faulty and most unnatural principle of supporting black against white races—a most unnatural principle, and one that most obviously cannot be upheld by any honest man. For this principle, if carried to its logical conclusion, would entail the evacuation of India by the British nation; and indeed of all tropical countries by Europeans. Why, indeed, should our black, brown, and yellow brothers in India be subjected to the armed control of Englishmen? * Why should they not be permitted to enjoy their lives after their own fashion; to burn the widows of those who die—the widows like it; to marry their children shortly after birth—the children like it—without the interference of the English ruler? Why should these poor creatures, our brothers, be downtrodden and oppressed by armed control? Armed control is but another name for slavery, as is the control of ignorance and faddism. Why should our coloured brethren be held in slavery by the British race? Where lies the necessity for so many British troops in India? There are many millions of our

* The author is fully aware that the Sikhs, Gurkhas, and nobler races of India can by no means be included in the same category as the Kaffir and negro races; but the fact remains that they are not on the same level as the white man, and it will be a bad day for England when the Sikh and the Gurkha considers himself the equal of the Englishman. Lord Roberts, in his "Rise of Wellington" (p. 38), writes:—"The Government of India depends for its stability on the sword."

coloured brethren in India who should, if left to their own devices, be able, surely, to safeguard the country. British civilians in India, with their wives and children, would assuredly, after all Great Britain has done for India, meet with no harm at the hands of our coloured brothers. British missionaries and faddists would assuredly rest content to live in peace and brotherhood with their coloured brothers without the defence of British bayonets. No! it is the religious enthusiast alone who will trust himself to the tender mercies of his black brothers, and he generally goes armed. The coloured man, as a whole, is on a different level to the white man, and has been since the world began; he is a different being in the scale of humanity, and can but little appreciate the white man's system of civilisation. He would, if opportunity offered, in any part of the world cast off the white man's control, accompanying the effort with all the horrible atrocities which maddened British soldiers against their "black brothers" in the mutiny.

It was this false sentiment for the black man which caused the "great trek," which has led to all the bloodshed in South Africa. It was this same false sentiment which caused four years of bloodshed in America.

In 1861 the Northern States of America ordered the Southern States to emancipate their slaves. The Northern States had but few black slaves, the Southerners had many, and their well-being depended upon the retention of those slaves. The Southern

States refused to ruin themselves, and to obey the order of the Northerners; they preferred rather to secede from the American Union. This the Northern States would not permit; and hence the War of Secession, in which some millions of white men fought against each other, the black men in the meanwhile standing aloof and breeding. The Southern States were defeated, the slave emancipated. At this present day the black question in certain parts of the United States has attained alarming proportions; the black man has an equal footing with the white man, and bids fair to swamp him. Matters are rapidly nearing a crisis; and it seems probable that in the near future the white man will be forced to fight for his supremacy against the black man that he has pampered. The black question in South Africa will similarly, in a few years to come, attain alarming proportions; and the solution will in all probability be a matter of great difficulty and bloodshed.

The Anglo-Saxon races have, it would seem, defied a law of nature in attempting to drag the black man up to their own level; and they must soon, it would appear, face them in the struggle for existence.

The British policy of supporting black races against white in South Africa was, it must be clear, but a dodge on the part of the existing British party then in power to win popularity and votes, regardless of the fact that it was committing a grave error both against nature and against strategy. It is perfectly clear from the history of South Africa that from first

to last British Governments in no way considered the good of the South African Colonies, or its own national interests in those colonies, but only its own self-interest, a motive which from a national point of view is pitifully petty. Its chief desire was to avoid all extension of responsibility with regard to South Africa, which country it evidently considered a growing nuisance. It did not, however, hesitate to exploit the unfortunate country, as in the matter of the Kaffir, to serve its own ends.

And so on to the end.

Between 1854 and 1880, the date of the War of Independence in the Transvaal, the peace strategy of Great Britain in South Africa is, as a whole, a display of ineptitude and indecision, which surely is without parallel in history. If there is any line of policy which appears to have been more continuous than another, it was that of a refusal to accept responsibility, of a desire to wash the hands of South Africa.

The attitude of the South African Republic was that of a woman who fears, yet wishes to be mastered; but who, if annexed, will quickly rebel against a weak man. The Transvaal having been annexed, rebelled and drove out the British garrison. A British army attempted its re-conquest and was defeated. The British Government thereupon gave in and admitted the defeat. The country was evacuated. This defeat has been given several names; it has, amongst others, been termed magnanimity. It was, in reality, fear,

and fear alone, which caused Great Britain to allow herself vanquished. It was not fear on the part of soldiers, or of the populace; it was fear on the part of the Government, fear of the Opposition, fear of faddists, fear of loss of power. It is by means of fear that one nation hopes to defeat another; what matter whether the adversary's soldiers, sailors, people, or government are stricken with fear? the result is the same, the adversary is defeated. Great Britain was defeated by the Boers in 1881; and, through the pusillanimity of her Government, gave in.

In 1875 Great Britain submitted her claim to Delagoa Bay to arbitration, lost it, and subsequently refused to purchase it for half a million sterling. Even at that date it must have been clear to every man who had studied strategy that the possession of Delagoa Bay by Great Britain would, in the event of any serious trouble in South Africa, become a strategical factor of the first importance, and that it would, in certain eventualities, be a decisive factor. It is useless to argue that British statesmen could not at that time recognise the value of the Transvaal; such an argument merely shows that British statesmen failed in the most important of all their duties, which is foresight. Here was a vast upland, fit to act as the cradle of a future white race. In this it was different to British possessions in Asia and North Africa, and for this reason alone was bound, as the necessity for power of expansion increased, to become of first importance to the British race. When in 1879

the Transvaal was formally annexed by Great Britain; and it had become apparent that the country was one which could by no means be disregarded, but that it formed a problem which, if not firmly dealt with by Great Britain, would in the near future become a source of infinite trouble, the possession of Delagoa Bay stepped at once into the front rank of strategical questions on which the success or failure of the British peoples in the struggle for existence would depend.

The nominal presentation of Delagoa Bay strongly guarded by British troops to the Transvaal, would have appeared as the most graceful present that could have been given by the Mother Country to its youngest child; and would have gone far towards the conciliation of the Boer. Such was a simple but most necessary measure of peace strategy; but it apparently found but little place in the thoughts of British statesmen, or if it were considered it was quickly discarded. After the Boer war of 1881 the possession of Delagoa Bay became a strategical necessity. The mere fact of its existence in the hands of the British would have formed a check on all pretensions of the Boers to become an independent nation; for it would have constituted a standing menace to Pretoria. In the war of 1899, its possession by the British would have formed one more objective for the consideration of the Boers. A number of possible objectives of which it is difficult to distinguish the strategical value is a grave disad-

vantage to a nation uneducated in military matters, for it leads to dispersion of force in place of concentration. The concentrated invasion of Natal by the Boers in 1899, Delagoa Bay being in the hands of the British, would have been an impossibility.

The harbour would have given the British an alternative base of operations within comparatively easy striking distance of Pretoria. Its possession would have acted as a lever by which Great Britain could have checked the spread of disloyalty in Cape Colony. It is, indeed, hardly too much to say that had Delagoa Bay been acquired by the British in 1875, the Boer war of 1881 would in all probability not have taken place; that had it been acquired after that war, the war of 1899 would not have taken place, or that, taking place, the Boers would have been conquered in one-third the time that was actually required. Delagoa Bay is still the decisive point in South Africa.

Van Reenens and the neighbouring passes over the Drakensberg range of mountains formed another decisive point in the event of war between Great Britain and the Transvaal. The possession of these passes by the British would have constituted a menace to the Free State, and was calculated to restrain them from affording assistance to the Transvaalers in the event of war. In case of an offensive war against the Free Staters combined with the Transvaal, it would have placed at the disposal of Great Britain a line of advance based on Natal, by which she might

separate Transvaal from Free State, and deal with her enemies in succession. In the event of a defensive war, it would threaten in flank, and thereby check any concentrated advance of the Free Staters against Cape Colony; while it would grant to the British the use of the Biggarsberg and Drakensberg as a zone of manœuvre by which she might, in certain eventualities, counterbalance inferiority of numbers. As events actually occurred, the failure to gain possession of these passes before the war placed Natal at the mercy of the Boers. When war with the Transvaal became imminent, it was an essential step in British peace strategy to seize these passes, no matter what the cost.

The official history of the Boer war has not yet been written, and the reasons for this failure in British peace strategy are not apparent. That the significance of these passes and of Delagoa Bay was overlooked by the eminent British soldiers who were the military leaders of the British army is inconceivable, and cannot be believed. It is easier to believe that British statesmen refused to accept the views of their responsible soldiers. The bold expression of an unpalatable truth is the worst offence that can be committed by the military subordinate of a party government; for knowledge involves action, and action is abhorrent to party government, for it is the opportunity of the Opposition.

But in any case it would be unfair to cast the entire blame on British statesmen, for the British

people would by no means have disgorged half a million sterling in payment for Delagoa Bay; while the clamour of philanthropists and peace societies, of the Opposition, and of members of Parliament of traitorous tendencies would, had Van Reenens Pass been seized, have overwhelmed the Government in power. No representative government would dare to face the outcry; for fear, which is the worst of all traits in a leader, is a pronounced feature of party government.

Great Britain's Peace Strategy in Europe

Great Britain has in the past fought to the last rather than permit a great and powerful nation to gain a strong position on the eastern shores of the North Sea, from whence Great Britain's supremacy on the sea and consequent existence could be threatened. After the Franco-German war, and towards the end of the nineteenth century, under representative government, she, by the cession of Heligoland to Germany, deliberately placed the great rising power of Europe in such a position. The retention of Heligoland by Great Britain, and its conversion into a torpedo station, would have rendered the existence of Wilhelmshaven as a great naval arsenal impossible, or at the least neutralised it. It would have acted as an outpost from which constant watch could have been maintained on the Kiel Canal. It is by means of the existence of this canal that Germany will hope in the future to wrest

the command of the sea from Great Britain. Great Britain herself, through her own ignorance, has forged a weapon which may in the near future mean her undoing. Great Britain's civilian statesmen have more than doubled the strength of the German navy, and, in the event of Germany and Russia becoming allies against Great Britain, of the Russian Baltic fleet. They have by this action alone brought Great Britain within measurable distance of invasion and defeat.*

In the struggles for supremacy between Great Britain and France the first effort at attack of either belligerent was to dispossess its adversary of, or to seize, Egypt. Egypt has been called the key of India, and this is true, for it is the connecting-link between Western Europe and India. The possession, or at least the control, of Egypt is vital to the retention of India by a Power of Western Europe. Even as lately as 1882, in the Tel-el-Kebir episode, Great Britain and France struggled for the mastery of Egypt, though in that struggle they did not come to

* See Part III., "Germany and the Empire." It will be argued that the fortification and conversion of Heligoland into a torpedo station would have been regarded by Germany as a *casus belli.* Possibly; but a *casus belli* does not necessarily mean war. Germany, at that time, was in no condition to declare war against Great Britain; she would have been beaten. The acquisition of Heligoland was a necessity before hope of success against Great Britain could even have been entertained by Germany. Did Great Britain regard the fortification of Heligoland and the construction of a great naval arsenal at Wilhelmshaven by Germany as a *casus belli?* There was more than sufficient reason.

actual blows. The constant vacillation in Great Britain's peace strategy with regard to Egypt will be remembered. Great Britain appears now, however, to recognise the importance of Egypt to the British Empire. It is, indeed, one of the three main lines of communication, arteries of the British Empire; and Great Britain can brook no interference with Egypt on the part of any Power.

Egypt of right belongs to Turkey. The Egyptians and the Sudanese are Mohammedans, and acknowledge the Sultan as their religious head. Religion has always played a leading part in war. Mohammedans throughout the world, though there exist many different and antagonistic sects, are a nation in themselves, and, in the event of war between Great Britain and Turkey, might rally round the Sultan, whether they did so in India, in Egypt, or in the Sudan. Turkey is a military Power, and could, even standing alone, be dealt with only by another military Power. A navy, however powerful, would be unable to inflict any adequate punishment on Turkey; for it is the height of stupidity to permit ships of war, on which a nation's supremacy at sea may at any time depend, under any circumstances, to engage shore batteries. In a single-handed war against Turkey, Great Britain would probably succeed in engaging the services of states such as Roumania, Servia, and Bulgaria; but with Turkey as the ally or the cat's-paw of a great nation, Great Britain would be forced to rely entirely on her own power.

In 1854 Great Britain fought Russia rather than allow her to extend her dominion towards the Eastern Mediterranean and Palestine, and towards Egypt. In 1878 Great Britain's national strategy, controlled by men who themselves were controlled by the sentimental outcry of faddists, which outcry on the subject of Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria was obviously deliberately worked up by Russia, held aloof and remained neutral while Russia defeated and dismembered Turkey; and this, nothwithstanding the fact that Turkey was apparently given every reason to hope for the assistance of Great Britain. Always vacillating, however in consequence of her ignorance of correct strategy, and dragged first in one and then in the opposite direction, and ultimately driven, but all too late, by the clamour of the clearer-sighted portion of the populace, she stepped in and forced Russia to relinquish the object almost attained, for which the latter had expended so much blood and treasure. Great Britain has thereby earned the hatred of Russia; she has similarly earned the hatred of the Turk, the religious head of all the Mohammedan races in the world, on whom her very existence may at any time depend. Great Britain's peace strategy has converted Turkey from a powerful friend into an enemy, a weak one, it may be, when standing alone, but powerful as the cat's-paw of a great nation.

Great Britain's Peace Strategy on the Frontier of India.

For many years past the British nation has feared that the Russians intended, at some time, to invade India; and public opinion has, when it has nothing more interesting to think of, been considerably exercised in mind over the question of the security or insecurity of the Indian frontier.

The problem of the defence of the frontier has given rise to much argument: and there are, amongst soldiers at least, three schools of thought on the subject. The forward school considers that the line Candahar-Cabul is the correct one to defend. Candahar and Cabul are, somewhat unfortunately perhaps, the property of the Afghans. Another school considers that the line of the Hindu Kush is the correct line to defend; while a third considers that the passes of the Hindu Kush should, in the event of invasion, be evacuated in favour of the line of the Indus.

No one of the above schools has as yet, apparently, obtained ascendency over the other; and the question of how the frontier is to be defended is still, it would seem, a matter of some doubt, and a question which will, in fact, be left to the decision of the man or men on the spot at the time.

There is one school which has considered the desirability of an offensive.

British peace strategy has, as a consequence, been based upon indecision and doubt.

The Afghan nation is a principal factor. Which side will it take? For it must take sides. Efforts have been made to induce the Afghans to fight for the defence of India against the Russian hordes; that is, to sacrifice themselves; the Afghans being openly termed, very correctly doubtless, but somewhat cynically perhaps, and certainly very impolitically, "a buffer state." The existence of a buffer state is doubtless pleasant to all concerned, except, perhaps, to the buffer itself. It is somewhat absurd, indeed, to suppose that the Afghans will oppose the Russians with the sole hope of being annihilated, when by joining the Russians they may well hope to share in the looting of the rich Indian cities. Great Britain has, however, lavished considerable sums of money on the Afghans, and has even assisted them with arms in the hope of binding them to her interests. Every man, in however small a degree conversant with the Asiatic character, knows that the Afghans will continue to receive their subsidies until the crisis arrives, when they will consider their own interests alone, will join that side from which they have most to fear, and will fight against that side whose defeat offers the better prospect of loot.

British troops have in the past on two occasions captured Cabul; and a fair opportunity for the annexation of the country was offered. Great Britain withdrew. This withdrawal was due to two causes: a determined refusal to accept fresh responsibili-

ties; and the paucity of troops. Great Britain's peace strategy has been based upon two great misapprehensions.

(1) The idea that a nation can with safety rest content with that which it has, and can refuse to advance further; and,

(2) The failure to recognise the fact that the offensive is the only safe defence,

The frontier of India cannot, any more than other frontiers, be defended by purely defensive measures. Rivers, mountains, deserts, however deep, rugged, or dry they may be—what are these to a determined assailant?

If Great Britain would retain India, she must be prepared to strike any nation which threatens to take it from her. The Indian Empire can be defended against the Russians in Russia alone. Great Britain's policy as regards both Afghanistan and the frontier hill tribes, has been feeble, and unworthy of a great nation. If she had, in 1842, recognised her responsibilities and firmly grasped the nettle and annexed the country, there is every reason to believe that the Afghans and hill tribes would by this time have been absorbed in the British Empire, and actuated by that loyalty to Great Britain which is displayed by the Sikhs and Gurkhas. As it is, however, though there may be some small doubt on the matter, it seems probable that Great Britain will, in the event of war with either Russia or Turkey, have to reckon with both Afghanistan and the hill tribes.

It will be said that, notwithstanding Great Britain's faulty peace strategy, she has within the last twenty years added both Uganda, with the Valley of the Nile, and Rhodesia to her possessions. Uganda was practically forced upon the Government against its will by one man, and that man a subordinate soldier; Rhodesia was annexed by Mr. Rhodes.

The Government certainly displayed unexpected strength in the Fashoda incident, but the man on the spot who took action was Lord Kitchener.

The extension of the Empire, this vast strategical problem, would indeed appear to be left to the enterprise of private individuals.

* * * * * *

Within the last fifty years two politicians have risen to pre-eminence as statesmen in Great Britain—Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Chamberlain.

The former, following in the footsteps of Cobden and Bright, and apparently regarding universal peace as the main objective of the British nation, would seem to have intended, as a means to this end, to cast off the British Colonies, to cut Ireland adrift, to hand the Sudan back to the Dervishes and barbarism, to hand Gibraltar back to Spain, and, in short, to place Great Britain in a position in which she could not, in any eventuality, wage war with a chance of success, and would not, therefore, be likely, under any circumstances, to plunge into war.

Fortunately for Great Britain, however, he was defeated on the Irish question by the withdrawal of

Mr. Chamberlain from his party. Mr. Chamberlain ultimately came to take a diametrically opposite view to that of Mr. Gladstone. He rose to prominence in time to take the reins in the South African crisis; and, as is well known, by his energy and determination may be said to have practically saved his country. He is now Imperialistic to a degree, and his object clearly is to bind together and strengthen the Empire.*

In short, the policy—that is, the peace strategy—of Great Britain from 1840 was to destroy the British Empire, to render her of no account in the world; her only safeguard against attack, extreme humility and helplessness. From the date of the failure to introduce Home Rule into Ireland, the policy of Great Britain has swung to the opposite extreme of the pendulum; it is now, after the experience of the Boer war, imperialistic; and the chief object of British statesmen is to consolidate the empire. How obviously absurd: a nation which wavers helplessly from one extreme to another, like a flock of sheep without leader or shepherd, wandering aimlessly here there, everywhere, its energies exhausted in bleating, is doomed to failure!

Mr. Chamberlain is no longer a young man, and with his death the policy of the country will doubtless

* Mr. Chamberlain has now set himself to cause the nation to finally discard the notions of the universal peace party; and, as a means to that end, to discard the principles of Free Trade, of which the expressed object was to separate Great Britain from her Colonies. (See Part IV., chapter xv., "The Problem of the Empire.")

swing back to the universal peace policy; and the nation, surrounded by other nations armed to the teeth, will inevitably be attacked and suffer disastrous defeat.

* * * * * *

Success in the struggle for existence depends on the moral qualities of a race; on its leadership; on its discipline; on its manhood; on its energy, education, and determination. National vices which sap the energy of a race must of necessity, in the end, bring defeat in war, the forerunner of the disappearance of a national existence. Certain social problems are closely bound up with, and allied to, the purely strategical questions which can be solved by the strategical expert alone.

It must be clear that a definite aim and continuity of policy can by no means be possible to a nation governed by representative government; for governments come and go, each in its turn pandering to the latest craze of popular prejudice or fancy. The failure of representative governments to grapple with certain social problems on which the future of the race depends is notorious. For a nation to permit its peace strategy to be directed by men ignorant of the art of war and of strategy—men, moreover, who are liable at a moment's notice to be driven from power by their opponents with diametrically opposite views—is to court disaster. When civilian statesmen, ignorant of war, withdraw the power to direct the strategical operations of an army in the

field from the general in chief command, and endeavour to direct such operations themselves, they are, all unwittingly perhaps, of very great value to the enemy. In the War of Secession in America, Lincoln and Stanton, the civilian statesmen of the Federals, assumed control of the Federal strategy. It has been estimated that in so doing their ignorance was worth fifty thousand men to the adversary, whose force numbered but little over one hundred thousand.* The statesman who, ignorant of war and of strategy, presumes to direct the peace strategy of a nation in modern times, takes upon himself the responsibility of bringing inevitable defeat upon his country.

The British nation has, as regards both India and South Africa, following the example of the Romans, endeavoured to say, "Thus far will I go, and no farther." The Roman Empire, having become stationary in its expansion, was attacked by enemies from without, supported by rebels from within, and broke up. The British nation has experienced the first phase of what is undoubtedly, unless adequate measures be adopted, its downfall, in the attack by its enemies from without in South Africa, supported by its rebels from within in Cape Colony, in Ireland, and even in England itself.

The struggle for existence between nations is becoming more acute. A nation even in the midst of profound peace is at war. In all dealings with

* "Stonewall Jackson," by Colonel G. F. R. Henderson, vol. ii., p. 5.

foreign Powers, the leaders of a nation should remember that on the action they adopt will depend success or failure in the inevitable final struggle for supremacy with its rival, which is open war. Their every action should be dictated by the strategical requirements. But this is impossible to a popular government which is itself governed by the populace. "A council of war never fights"; a government consisting of the populace can take no action of any sort until absolutely driven thereto. Fear of responsibility is inseparable from a party government, for assumption of responsibility is the opportunity of the Opposition. "Masterly inactivity" was the result of Mr. Gladstone's labours; and Mr. Gladstone, up to within the last few years, was, it would seem, after all, the greatest and ablest of all Great Britain's party politicians. He but just failed to ruin his country.

CHAPTER VII

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT AND PREPARATION FOR WAR

Secrecy in Preparation—Military Organisation and Training

Secrecy in Preparation for War.

IT has been shown how essential to success is efficient preparation for war.

This preparation for war, however, necessitates certain essentials, which are impossible under representative government.

The first of these is secrecy. Some idea of the great importance attached to secrecy by continental nations, which are in constant fear and danger of a great struggle for existence, may be gained by a consideration of the Dreyfus case.

Both in preparation and execution it is essential; for without it in preparation there can be none in execution; but on the latter success will always to a large extent depend. "Mystify and mislead," Colonel Henderson told us again and again; but an enemy can only be mystified and misled, provided the general, that is, the nation, has the power of secrecy. To

deprive a general in command of an army of the power of secrecy is to deprive him of a chief weapon in his armoury and almost to doom him to failure.

Secrecy is odious to the average man; curiosity is, moreover, a common failing of humanity. The necessity for secrecy in war is not understood by a nation of whom but a small percentage only have served as soldiers or sailors.

With the freedom of discussion permitted to the Press, to the Legislative Assemblies, and to politicians haranguing their constituents; with, moreover, the efforts of newspaper men to obtain information in advance of their contemporaries, secrecy in any matter is, under a purely representative government, practically impossible.

More than this, efficient preparation for war requires the secret expenditure of large funds; for there must be secret as well as open preparation.

The latter consists in the armaments of a country and of all such things as can by no possibility be kept secret; the former consists in the accumulation of intelligence, of the engagement of spies amongst the inhabitants of the country with whom war is expected, of the manipulation of the adversary's press and public opinion.

The necessity for expenditure on open preparation for war, causes under representative government, more than sufficient discussion throughout the country. Searching enquiry is instituted into the expenditure of each penny by those politicians and their supporters

in the Press, and amongst the inhabitants who desire, for their own or party ends to hamper the Government. Money for secret expenditure can only be voted after a similar searching and public enquiry, which would entirely defeat its own object. The idea of placing spies amongst the population of a friendly state would be intensely repugnant to those who, ignorant of war, cannot grasp the necessity for such a course. And yet an efficient spying system established years before a war is vital to good intelligence, and on good intelligence success or failure in great measure depends.

In the Austro-Prussian war, the proper employment of the Austrian cavalry, as the eyes and ears of the army forming a screen to obtain intelligence of the Prussians and to debar the Prussians from gaining similar intelligence of the Austrians, went far to neutralise Prussian victories, and to save the Austrians from the full results of defeat.

In the Franco-German war, the German cavalry employed almost entirely in watching every movement of the French, in gaining intelligence from the inhabitants, and in screening the German forces, enabled the Germans to concentrate with secrecy and rapidity, and consequently with decisive effect on the French.

The French cavalry were, on the other hand, retained as a reserve for the battlefield, and were never employed in obtaining intelligence. The result was that the French armies, constantly in the dark as to the movements of the Germans, were repeatedly surprised

and attacked at a disadvantage, and this notwithstanding the fact that they were fighting amongst their own countrymen, animated by a passionate patriotism.

In the latter part of the Boer war, the Boers, well mounted, scattered in small parties over a country they knew, everywhere utilising their women and children as spies, obtained early intelligence of every British movement, with the constant result of the so-called "disaster" to British arms.

Boer intelligence did not, indeed, confine itself to reporting movements of British troops; its agents, scattered throughout Cape Colony and Natal, in Europe, America, and even in Great Britain itself, stirred up sedition, endeavoured, apparently with success, to tamper with the Press and with politicians, and did its utmost to embroil Great Britain with foreign Powers.

Preparation for war is, indeed, largely made up by the establishment of an efficient Intelligence Department in peace-time in all countries with which war is possible. Such a department entails a heavy and secret expenditure, which is obviously impossible under a representative government, ignorant of everything connected with war, and even of the necessity for preparation.

It is only by the universal training to arms that a proper appreciation of the importance of war can be instilled into a nation; it is by such an appreciation alone that a nation can be brought to understand the necessity for preparation; and it is only

such knowledge on the part of a nation that will bring it to vote the money, secretly and without discussion, necessary for efficient preparation for war.*

* * * * * *

It has been shown how hopeless it is to expect secret preparation for war under a representative government; it would appear to be almost equally hopeless to expect efficient open preparation in the armaments of the country.

The cause is not far to seek. The party in power can only hope to retain its dominant position with the goodwill of the nation.

Increased taxation spells bad will amongst the ignorant, and this is naturally directed against those responsible, and being incessantly fostered by the Opposition will, in most cases, result in the ultimate downfall of the Ministry. It is obvious, therefore, that the primary object of the party in power must be to cut down expenditure, especially on all matters on which the necessity for increased expenditure is not apparent to the public.

* Many a British soldier, on the outbreak of the Boer war, rubbed his hands with delight at the thought of the awakening in store for the Boers. How it was probable, almost certain indeed, that the existence of a secret treaty between Great Britain and Portugal would be suddenly disclosed, by which Delagoa Bay would be placed at the disposal of the British; and how a sudden and rapid advance from that place of a large force from India would cause the almost immediate collapse of the Boer power. Such officers had not fully grasped the fact that secrecy or forethought was impossible to that form of leadership which is called representative government.

The apparent absence of danger and the absence of national training to arms, leads, as has already been said, to a general ignorance of all matters connected with war, and especially of the necessity for preparation. The necessity for increased armaments, and consequently for increased expenditure, is not immediately apparent to the nation at large, or, indeed, to its civilian rulers. If those civilian rulers had the necessary knowledge, they would, without doubt, be in a position to educate the populace in time. But they, not being soldiers or sailors, and having given no thought to the subject, have not that necessary knowledge. The result is that the armaments of the country are starved from a financial point of view, and quickly become inefficient and obsolete. Year by year does the general inefficiency become more pronounced; and the expenditure necessary to place matters upon a proper footing, greater, and therefore more impossible to party government.

The object of such a government would really appear to be to render the military machine perfect to all appearance on the surface, and to disregard, and indeed to refuse to believe in, the numerous hidden weaknesses in the structure.

It is sufficient if the general public—the voters—are content; soldiers and sailors, not being voters, may well be disregarded. It is the irony of fate that the blood and reputation of soldiers and sailors must pay the reckoning.

Manœuvres, for instance, are essential to the efficient training of an army.

In realistic manœuvres the army machine is tested. The ability of the general; the training of the staff; the efficiency of the departments, intelligence, transport, supply, remount, railway, telegraph, signalling, medical services; the military knowledge of regimental officers and the endurance of the men can all be tested.

Without manœuvres, no test is possible, and all ranks of the army go into war as a man goes into a dark room.

The army pays for its ignorance with its blood; the country pays with its money; those responsible under representative government pay not at all.

And under representative government realistic manœuvres are impossible. Ground is not available; and the Government dare not attempt legislation, for the movement of troops across private property is unpopular.

The army, therefore, makes pretence at manœuvres on a circumscribed area all too small. Generals are taught to make frontal attacks, for the defender's flanks rest always on the boundaries of private property into which no soldier may venture without risking the utmost rigour of the law. "Practice makes perfect"—even in imperfections.

Strategy, or the preliminary movements of armies, does not enter into the scheme, and yet it is on strategy that success or failure principally depends.

A staff cannot be trained, for no staff is required for such manœuvres.

Transport, except in absurdly small quantities, is unnecessary, for the railways will do it cheaper.

Intelligence, telegraph, signalling, remount, medical services, are all practically unnecessary.

The endurance of the troops may not be tested, lest recruiting be checked and the Government embarrassed.

Make-believe manœuvres are worse than useless; they teach a false lesson; war breaks out; generals make frontal attacks; departments everywhere break down; the staff is untrained; but officers and men display heroism, and pay with their blood. And generals and troops are subjected to the criticism of an ignorant Press and an ignorant populace, and even to the ignorant criticism and abuse of those responsible—politicians.

Such preparation for war is mere child's play—play with the most fearful thing in the world. That nation which can be guilty of such levity in its consideration of war, will sooner or later bitterly rue its childishness, or senility.

It may fairly be stated that the most notable features of representative government—civilian control of the armed forces of a nation, the desire to cut down expenditure, and the consequent subordination of military interests to party politics—prevent the adoption of measures which are obviously necessary for efficiency; they prevent also the employment of

the necessary number of troops with which to safeguard the interests of a nation, and even efficient training for the field.

At the beginning of the Boer war, for example, an army—one army corps, that is—of some forty to fifty thousand men for service abroad had been organised in Great Britain. In the Boer war about two hundred and fifty thousand men were found to be necessary. That the different departments, such as telegraphs, signalling, ordnance, army service corps, supplies, and medical, organised for an army of fifty thousand men but forced to cater for an army of two hundred and fifty thousand men broke down, goes without saying. That these services were performed at all argues considerable ability on the part of the British officer, combined with a somewhat startling capacity for discarding existing regulations and precedent. The organisation of a secret intelligence system, on which success must always to such a great extent depend, and on which every pound rightly expended in peace-time may well save a hundred pounds in war—to say nothing of the lives of men—was, needless to say, non-existent.

There is yet another point. Fear of the military is invariably a leading feature in a nation governed by representative government.

This fear leads to efforts to retain complete civilian control over both the army and the navy, which must of necessity have a damaging effect upon both services. It is, of course, absurd to suppose that a

civilian can make an efficient commander-in-chief for an army, or that a board, partly composed of civilians, can efficiently direct a navy; yet the Anglo-Saxon nations have found it necessary to adopt such measures to prevent all possibility of their fighting men gaining the control of affairs.

Great Britain had indeed found it necessary to go further, and to divest the unfortunate soldier, who is the nominal commander-in-chief and on whom the responsibility is thrust in time of defeat, of the control of military departments which should obviously be under his orders alone.

Such measures as these, which, rendering it impossible to fix the responsibility for maladministration upon the right shoulders, and which for that reason alone strike at the root of efficiency in the central organisation of the army, cannot but ruin the general efficiency of the army at large.

This fear on the part of the people of its own armed forces is impossible to a nation in which every able-bodied man has been trained to bear arms. A few, a small minority, bodily or mentally helpless, grumble from time to time at the supremacy of the national armed forces; but such grumbling is useless, for it is directed against the whole nation in arms.

In such a nation, Germany for example, there is no necessity—even should the possibility exist—to place a civilian in the position of commander-in-chief; but such a course is impossible, for all statesmen have been soldiers.

In France, again, the case is different. Here the legislators of the country are exempted from service, and are not soldiers. The form of government is, in fact, an attempted combination of a military national despotism and representative government. We see the late bitter struggle for supremacy between the armed forces of the nation and the civilian legislators.

Such struggles must be constantly expected in a country which is liable at any moment to a struggle for existence, and which is governed in the way France is governed; till such time, in fact, as France, being in grave danger of war, the armed forces of the nation forcibly seize supremacy from civilians in order to save the country from defeat.

A purely military despotism will result. France received a fearful lesson in 1870; her soldiers will not permit their country to pass through another such ordeal without a struggle to remove those from power who by their ignorance render such an ordeal probable.

Under a representative government the civilian ruler of an army, who is the commander-in-chief—virtually, though not in name—is also a member of the Cabinet. So, similarly, are the civilian rulers of the navy.

Being politicians, they are subject to the malign influence of party politics equally with other politicians; and should their duty towards their special department and their duty towards their party clash,

there may possibly be some doubt as to which will go to the wall.

Cases have, it is believed, been known in which the departmental interest—that is, the national interest, where the armed forces of a nation are concerned—have been given the primary consideration; generally, it must be allowed, with disastrous results to the politicians implicated.

CHAPTER VIII

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT AND THE CONDUCT OF WAR

The Illustration afforded by the Franco-German War—The Illustration afforded by the Boer War—The Illustration afforded by the War of Secession in America.

IT has been said that "a council of war never fights," and that no great general, or great sailor has called a council of war more than once, and has seldom, if ever, acted upon its advice.

"A house divided against itself cannot stand." A council of war is, as it were, a house divided against itself.

The quotation is the expression of the great truth that unless one brain, and one brain only, conceives and directs operations, no difficult enterprise can succeed.

It may be that commercial undertakings directed by a board of directors succeed when but slight competition exists; but even in such a case it is probable that one master mind, unknowingly to the others perhaps, leads and directs.

We have seen that a nation under representative

government—that is, one directed by many heads—cannot boast of peace strategy or prepare for war. In actual military operations, whether on sea or land, one head is indispensable; and this is a truism; one mind alone must direct operations, and one man must be paramount."

Napoleon has said that an army of stags led by a lion is preferable to an army of lions led by a stag; he took no thought to the possibility of a nation of lions led by many stags.

Before a single man, necessarily a soldier or a sailor, can be given sufficient power to enable him to undertake the great task of peace strategy and preparation for war, with its natural corollary the conduct of actual operations by sea or land, a nation labouring under purely representative government must be educated to the necessity of such a course. The education of a nation in which the opinion of the masses is the ruling power is impossible except with universal service, for the blind cannot lead the blind, and neither can the ignorant educate the ignorant.

Unless, therefore, a nation be prepared to adopt universal service, it must, under representative government, be prepared to be led and directed in the moment of a great national crisis by a board of civilian directors ignorant of their business.

This, if the crisis occur in modern times, when the opponent is a great nation trained to arms, must mean defeat.

To the indecisions of purpose which must result

from divided control, faulty strategy, with its resulting disasters, may be traced in most wars, whether ancient or modern.

A weak Government fears the clamour of the mob, the outcry of faddists, the Opposition, and every intangible shadow.

Thus in 1870 Napoleon III., an autocrat in name, but in reality a puppet in the hands of the Paris mob, feared to employ correct strategy lest he should be deposed.

Knowing, shortly after the declaration of war, that the Germans held the advantage of greater numbers, greater rapidity in mobilisation and in preliminary concentration—the initiative, in fact; the power of striking the first blow—he should have withdrawn his advanced troops out of reach of danger until such time as he could concentrate and act with every available man. In adopting such a course he must relinquish French territory; but this would have raised such a storm of rage and fury that the dynasty would have been endangered.

Napoleon, therefore, putting trust in the world-renowned bravery of French soldiers, adopted faulty strategy, and pushed forward detachments to the frontier to maintain inviolate the sacred French soil, and met with defeat.

His advanced detachments were overwhelmed and hurled back; his main armies unconcentrated and unready, were in their turn attacked and defeated; one, the main army, under Bazaine, cooped up in

Metz, the other, under McMahon, driven in headlong rout.

But there was still a chance, could but the clamour of the Paris mob and of French politicians be silenced. At this crisis it was unfortunate for France that she could produce no soldier strong enough to institute a military reign of terror in Paris.

Underhand political influence was at work; and intrigue (probably promoted by the Germans) was rife.

The remnants of McMahon's army joined to the available reserves might well, if properly directed, have stopped the run of German success until the whole French nation could be roused and armed, when there was every probability that the tables might still be turned.

Time was wanted, and time alone. The worst course that could be adopted was to place McMahon's new army in a confined space without room to manœuvre. If it were based on Orleans with the whole south and west of France from which to draw recruits and supplies, it might form the nucleus of a great *levée en masse*; and McMahon's army could furnish the necessary trained officers for such a levy. Without such officers a levy of ignorant men, however brave, would, against disciplined troops, be helpless.

But a movement south would uncover Paris to attack. It became in reality a question between the defeat of France and the safety of Paris; a question between the interests of France and the interests of the Parisian mob.

But this was, needless to say, a fact which could not be recognised by the Paris mob, for mobs cannot think or look ahead; and their selfishness, moreover, outweighs their patriotism.

The Paris mob was, unfortunately for France, omnipotent.

To the popular idea, moreover, it was base treachery to leave Bazaine's army to its fate. The fact that it was impracticable, without such marvellous fortune as could by no possibility be reckoned upon to relieve Bazaine at that time, and with the troops available, is not a point that is taken into consideration by mobs. Bazaine must be relieved, and at once, was the cry; and the soldier gave in and moved by the shortest route towards Metz. That route lay to the north between the German armies and the Belgian frontier.

The German armies, marching on Paris, perfectly organised, perfectly trained, and led by the greatest strategist since the time of Napoleon, were wheeled to the north against the ill-organised and disheartened French masses.

McMahon and Napoleon were in their turn cooped up and forced to surrender at Sedan.

The dynasty fell, as did Paris and France, after a few months of ineffectual and ill-directed struggle and heroism.

The French Government, at the commencement of the Franco-German war, was the worst of all forms of government. An autocracy in name, it was in reality a mob government pure and simple.

The populace terrorised the nominal ruler, as it afterwards terrorised its generals; it made first its Emperor and his wife and child, and afterwards one of its generals, the scapegoat for its own ignorance.

These men, bearing the greatest responsibility that men can bear, had at the least done their best. Not entirely theirs the fault that the nation was unprepared for war; not theirs the fault that French armies were defeated and that French territory was invaded. The fault lay largely with the Paris populace and with the spokesmen of the populace, too ignorant to grasp the necessity of refraining from interference in military matters.

The Emperor's chief fault lay in the fact that he was too weak a man to secure his position, and with it the safety of France, by an endeavour to quell the Paris mob at the outbreak of the war with the sternest possible hand, and if necessary at the comparatively small cost of burning half Paris.

Let us contrast the French action adopted from fear of popular outcry with the action adopted by the Germans, who had a similar but far more real expression of public feeling to fear.

The South German States had but four years before, after a short struggle, in which they had been enemies, been incorporated with the German Empire.

Could the French gain some initial successes and invade the South German States, there was every prospect that the latter would turn against Prussia.

Could the French even penetrate into those Southern States without opposition there was every prospect of the same result, for the popular cry would necessarily be that Prussia had abandoned them to their fate.

Moltke did not, however, in face of this very real danger, hesitate to denude the South German States of their own troops, in order that they might take their place in the strategical concentration which had been ordered on the frontier between France and North Germany.

To the public mind of South Germany this concentration, while safeguarding the Northern States, left the South German States completely at the mercy of the French. In any country but those well disciplined by universal service, popular clamour would have risen to an extreme height.

In France the mob would in all probability have sacked the palace and deposed the Emperor. In Great Britain or the United States Moltke's correct strategy would, owing to the mere fear of the clamour of the Opposition, the populace, and the Press, have been discarded by the Government in power as out of the question.

But we have another example nearer home.

The British army in Natal, some five thousand men, under the immediate orders of General Sir W. Penn Symons, who was under the command of the Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Natal, was on September 24th pushed forward to Glencoe Junction

to "protect the important collieries at Dundee." * This movement amounted practically to the strategical deployment of the British force in Natal, the basis and the most important of all strategical operations. It was ordered by the civil authorities.

Van Reenens and the neighbouring passes west of Ladysmith, the decisive point of the Natal theatre, were not in the hands of the British, and were situated within some thirty miles, or one easy day's march for the Boers, of the British line of communications at Ladysmith, some sixty miles in rear of the British army. The British position was, consequently, one of extreme danger; and the prospect of decisive advantages alone could have justified its occupation. There were no such advantages to be hoped for in this case; and the move was, as a strategical measure in the theatre of war, utterly indefensible. As a measure of peace strategy it was, if possible, worse. The Boers had long prepared for war, war was imminent, British reinforcements were on the seas. The object of the British authorities in Natal should most obviously have been to refrain from any measure which might precipitate hostilities before the arrival of reinforcements. The advance to Glencoe, taken in conjunction with the last paragraph of the despatch of September 22nd from the Imperial Cabinet to the Boers,† offered a distinct threat to the Boers. The Boers took immediate advantage of the

* *Times* History, vol. ii., p. 109.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 350.

opportunity and commenced to mobilise. Had the Boer nation been led by a trained strategical expert the annihilation of the British army in Natal and the capture of Durban would have been achieved within ten days. It would thus appear that the whole available British force in Natal was offered up as a sacrifice to the Boers by the civilian authorities.

When, subsequently, owing to the great Boer mistake in not precipitating the war, Great Britain had succeeded in throwing some ten thousand men into Natal, with which to check a Boer invasion at all hazards until reinforcements should arrive, the subordination of strategy to political considerations bid fair to destroy the last hope of British success.

Strategy demanded that the available British force, vastly inferior in numbers and in mobility to the Boers, should be concentrated in such a position as would enable it to strike with effect, if opportunity offered, and with the full force available, and to retreat rapidly. Dispersion of the British force meant, with its inferior mobility, and owing to the fact that the decisive point, Van Reenens Pass, was held by the Boers, the almost certain prospect of having each portion overwhelmed in turn.

Though it was not recognised at the time, the existence of the British Empire depended upon the correct handling of the handful of British troops in Natal.

There was no reason to suppose that the Boers would fail to take immediate advantage of any strategical error made by the British.

It is, in itself, a strategical mistake to fail to credit the adversary with a sound knowledge of strategy.

Such reasons as could be produced in favour of dispersion of the British force were purely political.

They were to the effect that evacuation of territory without a blow struck would demoralise the inhabitants, white and black; and that the loss of the coalfields at Dundee would be serious.

Such an argument entirely disregarded the fact that evacuation of territory after defeat must always be far more demoralising than evacuation without striking a blow.

The loss of the coalfields at Dundee was indeed childish as a reason for risking the almost certain and decisive defeat of the only available British force in Natal.

This dispersion of the British forces can only, in fact, be stigmatised as a strategical error. Yet this error was deliberately committed. About one-third of the available British force which had been detached beyond all hope of support from the main body, was left isolated at Glencoe to withstand the brunt of the Boer invasion.

Assuming that the Boers were not entirely ignorant of strategy and were not entirely worthless as fighting men, the various prospects before this detached force of some four thousand men were:—

1. To be cut off and attacked by some twenty thousand to thirty thousand Boers, possibly more, and annihilated.

2. To seize a position, and to be there besieged without supplies, until starved into surrender.

3. To recognise the false situation in time, and to make a rapid retreat in face of an adversary vastly superior in numbers and in mobility.

4. To win a tactical success, to be immediately followed by a probably disastrous retreat.

Owing to the faulty strategy of the Boers and to the gallantry of the British soldier, this detached force won a tactical success, and successfully carried out a hazardous and difficult retreat."

The Boers endeavoured to throw their main strength against the small British detached force at Dundee.

General Joubert, however, committed the strategical blunder, so dear to amateur strategists and to those who have not studied the art of war, of endeavouring by means of several converging columns to envelop his adversary.

History has taught that this method is doomed to failure, except only when the adversary remains inactive until crushed.

The reason is simple. Converging columns cannot keep touch with one another when in movement.

The difficulty of co-operation and of exactly timing the movements of the different columns is, notwithstanding the existence of the telegraph, so great as to be practically insuperable. A check to one column paralyses all; for ill news flies quickly, and in the "fog of war" affects the nerves. In the War of

Secession in America, Stonewall Jackson, threatened by three converging columns, each considerably superior in numbers to his whole force, did not hesitate to delay in his position until retreat seemed impossible. He then struck at one column, paralysing the other two, and effected his retreat unmolested.

Similar instances were frequent in the latter part of the Boer war in the efforts of British columns to converge on small Boer Commandoes.

Instances in history of success are few.

Great leaders have from time to time successfully conducted the operation, but their success has in most cases been due to the supineness of the adversary.

If the Boers had been possessed of greater knowledge of strategy, and advanced, not in three converging columns, but concentrated in one column on the road between Dundee and Ladysmith, and struck the detached force from the south-west and south, nothing, so far as one can see, could have saved the latter from destruction or surrender. The Boers, by bad strategy, gave the British a loophole of escape, of which they availed themselves.

It is not altogether idle perhaps to speculate on the probable results had the British detached force at Dundee been destroyed or captured.

The first result of so decisive a victory for the Boers in the first battle of the war would have been o confirm all waverers in Natal certainly, and most

probably in Cape Colony also, in their allegiance to the Dutch cause. This in itself would have been a sufficient disaster, but more would have followed. The force left at Ladysmith would have been entirely inadequate for the defence of that place, and it is probable that some effort would have been made to destroy the supplies and munitions of war in the place and to retire.

Had Ladysmith been held by the greatly reduced force, its fall in the light of later operations would have been almost a certainty, and Durban would probably have fallen. Had Ladysmith been evacuated, so small a force, some ten thousand men, could have done but little to delay the advance of the victorious Boers; it would have been driven in considerable haste to Pietermaritzburg and Durban, to entrench itself and hold out as long as possible at the latter place.

The result, indeed, of such successes on the part of the Boers would, in all probability, have led to the ultimate and entire success of the Boer plans.

It is doubtless easy to be wise after the event; but the dispersion of the British force in Natal was a mistake which is recognised as being indefensible. Military history teems with similar examples; and the probable result of such faulty strategy should have been clearly foreseen. It was apparently the pernicious influence of the civilian authorities, the men who, in all probability, had given no thought to the study of war, and who, consequently, had

no conception of even the rudiments of strategy, who had in the first instance ordered this detached force to Glencoe, and who later expressed the opinion that it should be retained there.* There is, however, one fact which is patent to all. The political reasons given in this case were so feeble that they could not, in themselves, have borne weight for a moment with the scientific soldier but for the fact that they were put forward by the Governor and Commander-in-Chief, the Head of the Colony. Had they been urged by any soldier he would rightly have been laughed at; and, in all probability, forthwith removed from any position of trust. Members of the Civil Government in high places should, at the least, it would seem, make a cursory study of war, in order that, knowing their own ignorance, they may, when placed in so critical a position, refuse absolutely to give advice. If it be asked how came it that a trained soldier, on whom the responsibility for failure must fall, was forced to take the advice of civilians on a purely strategical question; the answer is that for centuries past the British soldier has been taught by the nation to consider the civilian administrator as the acme of wisdom, and himself as the reverse; for he is, even in the field, placed under the orders of a political officer, no matter in what part of the world the operations may take place, whether in India or in West Africa.

This teaching has, let us hope, been finally dis-

* See *Times* History.

proved in the Boer war. It is, however, one of the numerous disadvantages of representative government, that even in war-time soldiers or sailors, men whose duty it is to defend their country with their lives, are placed in a position subordinate to civilian officials, whose duty it should be, one would think, to confine their attention to civil matters.

It should, it would seem, be recognised by soldiers that in time of war interference by civilians ignorant of war, whether such interference be deliberate or merely inadvertent, is a danger to the nation, and should therefore be sternly suppressed.* A soldier's duty is—firstly, to his country; secondly, to the Constitution. If these duties in any way clash, his duty to his country—and this surely is clear to all men—must be given precedence. A soldier will willingly risk his life—aye, and, if need be, sacrifice it—for his country. Why should he hesitate to risk his future career?

But these things are impossible in nations in which every able-bodied man is a soldier.

In such a nation all men, with the exception of professional agitators, who are few in number and fearful in disposition, are cognisant of three things:—

1. That their military chiefs are the best men the nation can produce, and are untrammelled.

* In many British colonies the Governor, who may be a civilian, is *ex officio* also the Commander-in-Chief, and as such controls the military authorities.

2. That on their obedience to those chiefs the security of their country and home depends.

3. That those men who have never been soldiers are of no account, as being men either mentally or bodily unfit.

The more one studies the fatal effects which political considerations have on strategy, the more one is tempted to jump to the conclusion that most strategical and tactical mistakes are due to the pernicious influence of political considerations. With these political considerations warping the mind of a general already strained to breaking point by his great responsibilities; with, possibly, the anxious face of a political representative in his council chamber, it is quite conceivable that they are, in fact, responsible for nearly all strategical and tactical faults that lead to defeat.

And perhaps the most notable illustration of all that the Boer war presents is to come.

When the first British reinforcements were on the way to South Africa the sieges of Ladysmith and Kimberley had already commenced, and were being conducted with energy by the Boers. The excitement in England as to the fate of these places was intense.

When the reinforcements arrived in South Africa, to the astonishment of all soldiers at home, one half the force was landed at the Cape Colony ports, while the remainder was sent to Natal. It was an open secret that a concentrated advance on Bloemfontein

from the Orange River had been in contemplation. If this be true the plan of campaign had suddenly been altered in view of the situation.

Strategy seemed to demand a concentrated advance against one of the Boer armies, either the one in Natal or the one round Kimberley. The Boer forces round Kimberley offered a line of communication to Bloemfontein open to attack, while the country about the Orange River was by no means so suitable a country for defence by the Boers as was Natal.

However that may be, the advance on Bloemfontein had apparently been determined upon, the selection having been made with a full knowledge of the Boer invasion of Natal, and with the idea that an advance on Bloemfontein would indirectly cause the evacuation of Natal and the relief of Ladysmith, better than would a direct advance against the Boers in Natal itself.*

Whichever course was adopted, strategy would at least seem to require that the advance should be made with the whole available strength, and that under no circumstances should troops be detached to deal with secondary objects, such as the relief of besieged towns.

And yet we see the whole force which England could at that time put forth split into two portions, one portion being sent to gain one secondary object

* The plan of campaign had been evolved—it now appears from Sir R. Buller's evidence given before the Royal Commission —prior to the Boer invasion of Natal.

on one side of the theatre of war, while the other portion was sent to gain another secondary object at the other side of the theatre of war. The main object, a concentrated advance on the most vulnerable point of the Boers, was discarded.

In its place an effort was to be made to prevent the enemy carrying out his designs in the shape of the capture of the two towns. The Boers had forced the British to conform to their movements, and the British army had, by splitting up, cast away the initiative.

We all know how the relief operations ended. Too weak, both in Natal and on the Kimberley side, the British forces were unable to prevent the Boers carrying out their object—the prosecution of the sieges.

We all know also how Lord Roberts' concentrated advance on Cronje's line of communication—that is, to cut one of the Dutch armies from its base—relieved not only Kimberley but, indirectly, to some extent, Ladysmith. It was the concentrated advance that overwhelmed the Boers, the concentration of every available man at the decisive point which strategy demands, that led to success.

In how far did political considerations lead to the dispersion of the first British reinforcement to arrive in South Africa?

In how far did political considerations dictate the change of plan, the direct efforts to relieve the two beleaguered towns in place of the concentrated advance originally intended?

These questions cannot be answered at the present time. It is only when national events have become history that sufficient light is thrown on the secrets of a war to enable us to judge.*

True strategy dictates a concentrated blow at the enemy's most vulnerable point, no matter how small the force available for the stroke.†

That vulnerable point would seem to have been

* The evidence given before the Royal Commission has now cleared up this point. The course adopted by Sir Redvers Buller was based on purely strategical considerations; the situation was so serious that he was forced to discard the original plan of campaign and adopt a defensive attitude. Every line of his evidence, however, shows most clearly and emphatically the almost hopeless position of a General who is ordered to carry out with an insufficient force a plan of campaign which has been based on a false estimate of the situation. It moreover shows clearly that war strategy depends for success on peace strategy and preparation for war; and that a general, no matter how able, must fail if he be the subordinate of an incapable Government.

† Count Yorcke von Wartenburg, in his "Napoleon as a General," writes as follows:—

"It is necessary, in addition, to be able always to distinguish readily the point at which the concentrated attack should be delivered, and to possess the strength of mind to disregard all secondary matters, however important they may seem to be, in order to bring your whole force to bear at the decisive point. It is, above all, this clearness and logical pursuit of strategical plans that we admire in Napoleon, and which make the study of him as a general profitable. When, after the conclusion of the whole campaign now under consideration, he had marched victoriously through Italy into the heart of Austria, he himself said, with reference to his strategy:—'There are in Europe many good generals, but they see too many things at once. As for me, I see only one thing—namely, the enemy's main body. I try to crush it, confident that secondary matters will then settle themselves.'"

Cronje's army round Kimberley, which was based on Bloemfontein. Success against Cronje would, as it afterwards did, have had its bearing on the operations in Natal. It would have forced the Boers to reduce their forces in Natal for the defence of Bloemfontein, or to have raised the siege of Ladysmith with a view to concentrating on Sir Redvers Buller. In the former case it would have rendered the Boers weak everywhere, and have offered one, if not two, more vulnerable points to the attack of reinforcements. The latter course would, at the least, have caused the relief of Ladysmith, and set free the besieged British force.

The mere display of force, which was probably responsible for the dispersion of the British army, is actuated by political considerations.* Such considerations are false, for success on the battlefield is the better means by which to overawe a hostile or disloyal population; while a mere display of force, combined with faulty strategy which brings defeat in its train, is a direct incentive to rebellion.†

* A display of force is but another form of that favourite feature of British foreign policy, a "demonstration." It is similar to the street boy's "Do that again, and I will knock your head off." Strategy strikes first and threatens afterwards. Some of these days, a nation against whom Great Britain makes a naval demonstration will seize the opportunity, destroy the demonstration, and declare war. A mere unsupported demonstration is bad strategy, inasmuch as it, without adequate reason, risks the destruction of a small force. A demonstration is only permissible when it is a feint intended to draw the enemy's attention from the main attack which is in progress elsewhere.

† These operations have been dealt with merely to show the extent

Thus it may be that the fear of popular clamour resulted in the first instance in the dispersion of the British forces in place of concentration; that it afterwards, in conjunction with political considerations, led to the division of the British reinforcements;* and this in its turn led directly to the defeats of Magersfontein and Colenso. Let us contrast these operations with those at Paardeburg when the terrified British people and Government at last placed implicit trust in a British general. Some months of preparation, a carefully-thought-out strategical plan, a masterly, rapid, and concentrated advance against the vulnerable point of the enemy, the line of communications of Cronje's army round Kimberley, which culminated in the interruption of Cronje's retreat at Paardeburg.

Cronje occupied a position. The memory of attacks on Boer positions was fresh in the minds of, not only the British populace, but even of British soldiers.

An attack on Cronje would, it was probable, be repulsed with considerable loss of life.

Such loss of life, if considered unnecessary by

to which political considerations may exert a malign influence on strategy; and it must not be thought that the author would venture to criticise Sir Redvers Buller's actions. As events actually occurred it is undoubtedly the case that Sir R. Buller saved South Africa for the British Empire; while had he attempted to carry out the original offensive plan of campaign it is possible that irretrievable ruin would have resulted.

* This, as has been pointed out, was to a small extent only the case.

public opinion, entails an expression of popular clamour, which is principally directed against the responsible general.

Cronje, on the night of the 17th February, was practically surrounded, but in no way so closely invested as to preclude all possibility of escape, provided he could bring himself to abandon his waggons and his women.

The fighting Boers alone, not the waggons or the women, formed the objective of the difficult operations which had reached their culminating point at Paardeburg.

Let us endeavour to grasp the problem as it must have presented itself to the military authority on the spot.

Am I to attack the Boer laager or no?

If I attack, I probably meet with repulse, and probably heavy loss. The attack will, however, at the least, hold the fighting Boers to their position, and prevent their possible escape until such time as I can bring up reinforcements and complete the investment.

If I do not attack, the Boers may, and probably will, escape with all their fighting men, leaving me with the mere shell in the shape of waggons and women, which I do not want.

If, through my pusillanimity and moral cowardice, I lose this chance of capturing Cronje, I throw away the possibility of inflicting what will certainly be a serious, and what may well be a decisive, defeat on

the Boers; and I will, moreover, render useless all the strenuous efforts which have now reached the point of culmination. My duty to my country, then, demands that I attack the Boers, no matter what our losses may be.

The military authority attacked, lost heavily, and has been much criticised for so doing; but yet the object was achieved.

Another argument would have presented itself to many men placed in similar circumstances. In this category we may, with entire conviction, and with no fear of doing injustice, place almost every member of a representative government, every party or professional politician, and at least 99 per cent. of the populace of undisciplined nations ignorant of war.

The argument is:—

What will people say if I am repulsed and lose heavily? And what will happen to me?

There are few men to whom the moral courage is given to rise superior to the fear of public obloquy. Generals are but men, and can only do their best. The fear of popular clamour, the ignorant criticism of the Press, and the malevolent disparagement of party politicians can only render the performance of duty more difficult, and the assumption of such vast responsibility almost overwhelming.

Of a truth, the general of a nation which possesses so-called responsible, or rather irresponsible, government must indeed be a god.

The Illustration Afforded by the War of Secession in America.

McClellan, with a Federal army, largely superior to that of the Confederates, was threatening Richmond, the Southern capital. He had been defeated by Lee, and driven into entrenchments at his place of embarkation some twenty-five to thirty miles only from Richmond itself.

Though defeated, his position was practically impregnable; and, as it was known to the Southerners that he was expecting reinforcements, it will be seen that his mere presence was a menace to Richmond. The capture of Richmond might be expected to terminate the war in favour of the Federals. It was at this moment that Jackson, the great soldier, urged, notwithstanding the numerical inferiority of the Confederate forces, a transfer of the Confederate army to the North, with a view to assuming the offensive against Washington, the Northern capital, the vulnerable point of the Northern States. This course, he urged, would carry the horrors of war into the enemy's territory, and would cause the withdrawal of McClellan and his army from the vicinity of Richmond for the defence of Washington. Blows, repeated blows, alone could bring the Northern States to terms. Jackson, in fact, wished to play upon the fears of the Washington populace and the Northern statesmen.

The operation he proposed would practically

leave Richmond defenceless in case McClellan made a bold dash for the town on the withdrawal of the Confederate army. Such a course was not, however, to be feared, inasmuch as McClellan had but just been severely defeated, and had formed an entirely erroneous and exaggerated estimate of his opponent's numbers. His personal characteristics had, moreover, to be taken into consideration.

The situation of the South was such that boldness was the best policy, and was, in fact, the only hope of securing ultimate success.

Jackson's plan was laid before the President, Mr. Davis—presumably by Lee, the Commander-in-Chief—who apparently laid it before the Government.

"The situation, in the opinion of the Government, was still critical. McClellan might be reinforced by sea. He might be superseded by a more energetic commander, and the Federals might then cross to the right bank of the James, cut the railways which connected Richmond with the South, and turn the line of fortifications. The losses of the seven days had reduced the Confederate strength to sixty thousand. Under such circumstances it was not considered safe to remove the army from the capital." *

In other words, the Government, composed of civilians ignorant of war, refused to permit the adoption of the plan evolved by their war experts; for there can be no doubt that Lee's opinion

* "Stonewall Jackson," vol. ii., p. 77.

coincided with that of Jackson; as, notwithstanding the decision of the Government, he permitted Jackson to carry out his plan in a modified form, and with his own troops alone, while retaining the mass of the Confederate forces round Richmond in deference to the opinion of the Government. A month later, when McClellan, recalled to the defence of Washington by Jackson's successes, was leaving the vicinity of Richmond, an effort was made to carry out Jackson's plan with the whole available Confederate army. The time had gone by, however; the decisive moment had been lost, and though the Confederate generals by their brilliant strategy won great successes, the chance of the South had gone for ever.

Could the civilian Government of the Southern States have been eliminated, or could it have exercised sufficient self-restraint to refrain from all interference in strategy, of which subject it was profoundly ignorant, it is more than probable that the South would eventually have gained the victory.

The whole war, indeed, teems with a succession of examples of the incompetence of civilian statesmen —great, possibly, in the paths of party politics, but ignorant of war—to direct military operations.

The successes of the Southern States were due in great part to the fact that the Southern generals were somewhat less trammelled in the exercise of strategy by their civilian rulers, than was the case with the Northern generals. It says much for President Lincoln that he ultimately learned, and

in a short space of time, sufficient of the art of war to recognise his ignorance and to place the control of the strategy in the hands of a soldier; but who can estimate the amount of blood shed by the soldiers of the Northern States for which he, and he alone, is responsible, before the scales fell from his eyes?

President Lincoln and his Cabinet was the weak point of the Federals. Speaking of Stonewall Jackson, Colonel Henderson says:—

"From the very first he recognised the weakness of the Federal position—the anxiety with which the President and the people regarded Washington—and on this anxiety he traded. Every blow struck in the valley campaign, from Kernstown to Cross Keys, was struck at Lincoln and his Cabinet; every movement, including the advance against Pope on Cedar Run, was calculated with reference to the effect it would produce in the Federal councils; and if he consistently advocated invasion, it was not because Virginia would be relieved of the enemy's presence, but because treaties of peace are only signed within sight of the hostile capital." *

President Lincoln was, indeed, both the strength and the weakness of the Northern States; the strength, inasmuch as his great personal qualities and his unwavering determination to win at all costs upheld the Northern States in the hour of adversity;

* "Stonewall Jackson," vol. ii., p. 485.

the weakness, inasmuch as his exceeding ignorance of strategy and of the art of war rendered him incompetent to direct the Northern operations, and, master mind though his was, to refrain from interference. Had President Lincoln being a trained expert in strategy and the art of war, the issue of the War of Secession could never have been in doubt.*

Months later, the Federals having command of the sea, and having established a close blockade of the coast-line of the Confederation, were gradually reducing the Southern States to a state of exhaustion.

At this time, when the Northern general, Burnside, was on the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg, opposed by Lee and Jackson, the Southern States could gain success by a great decisive victory, or a decisive succession of victories, alone. A successful defensive battle, pure and simple, in which the Federals should be merely repulsed, would mean but to delay the evil day; the result would be that the Federals, reinforced, would again assume the offensive, and would ultimately win.

To quote Colonel Henderson:—

"It was not by partial triumphs, not by the slaughter of a few brigades, by defence without

* History repeats itself. The weak point of the British nation in the Boer war was its party government, and the power exercised over the councils of the country by untaught public opinion and the outcry of faddists. It was at this weak point that the Boer generals and Boer intrigue struck again and again. The invasion of Cape Colony in 1900 was a blow struck at the British Government; and so, too, the agitation on the subject of concentration camps.

counter-stroke, by victories without pursuit, that a Power* of such strength and vitality could be compelled to confess her impotence.

"It had been well for the Confederacy if Stonewall Jackson, whose resolute strategy had but one aim, and that aim the annihilation of the enemy, had been the supreme director of her councils."†

Lee and Stonewall Jackson, the Southern generals, desired, in accordance with the dictates of strategy, to draw the enemy across the Rappahannock to a distance from his base, in order that the superior generalship and superior strategy of the Southerners might be given the opportunity of inflicting decisive defeat on the Northern army. To oppose the Northern army on the Rappahannock could only lead to the mere repulse of it. "Lee, however, was fettered by the orders of the Cabinet; and Mr. Davis and his advisers, more concerned with the importance of retaining an area of country which still furnished supplies, than of annihilating the army of the Potomac,‡ and relying on European intervention rather than on the valour of the Southern soldier, were responsible for the occupation of the Fredericksburg position"§—that is, of opposing the Federals on the line of the Rappahannock, where decisive success was impossible.

* The Northern States.
† "Stonewall Jackson," vol. ii., p. 332.
‡ The Northern army.
§ "Stonewall Jackson," vol. ii., p. 333.

Mr. Davis and his civilian advisers holding, unfortunately for the Southern States, authority over the Southern generals, interfered in the province of the strategist, and once again in their ignorance cast away the hope of success.

Lee and Jackson, having repulsed Burnside on the Rappahannock, again urged on Mr. Davis and the Southern Government the necessity for an offensive movement towards the Northern capital, Washington.

"'He (Lee) was assured, however,' says General Longstreet, 'that the war was virtually over, and that we need not harass our troops by marches and other hardships. Gold had advanced in New York to two hundred premium; and we were told by those in the Confederate capital that in thirty or forty days we would be recognised (by the European Powers), and peace proclaimed. General Lee did not share this belief.'" *

Once again Mr. Davis and his civilian advisers ruined the chances of the Southern States.

The bravery of the Confederate soldiers, the fine strategy of the Confederate generals, were helpless, not against the vast superiority of the Federal armies, but against the ignorance of their own civilian rulers. The strategist is made, not born; and those men alone who have made a life-long study of the art of war and of strategy are able to form a correct judgment on the strategical situation, and the correct course to be adopted.

* "Stonewall Jackson," vol. ii., p. 336.

Civilians, no matter who they may be, ignorant of war and of strategy, who force their ideas on the general of the army, or on the admiral of the fleet, take on themselves the responsibility for the almost certain defeat of their country. The true interests of a country, when at war, demand, it would seem, the suppression of a civil government, if necessary by force.

CHAPTER IX

ADAPTABILITY OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT FOR WAR PURPOSES

Martial and Civil Law in the Boer War—The System of Leadership in the Boer War—The inherent Weakness of Representative Government for War Purposes.

A COMPARISON between civil and martial law is practically similar to one between representative government and military despotism or autocracy.

Representative government exists almost solely with a view to the internal interests of a nation, such as trade and national comfort, and was not framed for that most important of all questions, success in war.

Military despotism, on the other hand, pays little or no heed to internal considerations, but is framed solely with a view to success in war.

Civil law has grown up during many centuries; the object being to safeguard the interests of individuals or of companies of individuals, the interests of trade and of politics. It gives no thought to national interests in war-time.

Martial law pure and simple is a relic of barbarism; it considers only questions of war and national interests, and disregards purely individual interests.

But war is in itself a relapse to barbarism; and the law of a country about to engage in war must similarly approximate to barbaric methods in all matters in any way bearing on the conduct of war.

The points on which civil and martial law come into collision are principally those connected with the liberty of the subject.

Under civil law every man is innocent until he is proved guilty. No man can be arrested unless fair proof of his guilt has been produced and sworn to before a magistrate. No man can be detained in prison without being brought to trial in open court with the smallest delay possible, evidence being produced. Though moral proof may be produced against a man, yet the case against him may break down; in such an event he is acquitted and must forthwith be released.

There is no practical law under which spies, or those intriguing to assist the enemy, can be arrested. In war-time, one successful spy may bring defeat on that nation which harbours him.

It was the well-organised system of intrigue in Cape Colony which led to the second and third invasions by the Boers, and to the consequent extension of the rebellion. Persons engaged in such intrigue are, to all intents and purposes, spies; their methods being to pose as peaceful citizens,

while in reality they preach sedition and incite to rebellion. Proof against such men who, so to speak, work underground, can only be obtained by countermining, and by the employment of secret detectives.

The employment of secret detectives is obnoxious to all men, who, through ignorance or prejudice, can see no necessity for their use. So great is the popular detestation of such work that a hint given to the public of the nature of the work on which a secret detective is engaged, is quickly passed from one person to another until the detective becomes a marked man and useless. Good detectives may number as many as one in every fifty who are tested. The utmost secrecy is necessary to prevent the knowledge of the nature of the man's employment becoming public property; and this is more especially the case when the population is disloyal. To take such a man to give evidence before a magistrate, possibly himself disloyal, or possibly even a member of the enemy's intrigue, is to render secrecy impossible, and to lose the services of the one valuable agent out of perhaps a secret service consisting of six persons only.

The conviction of one or two of the enemy's spies, while having little or no effect in checking the great mass of intrigue, will quickly break up one's own secret service system, which has, probably, been established only after the expenditure of much time, thought, and money; because each such conviction involves the exposure during trial before the magistrate of at

least two of the Government's secret agents, who are required by civil law to give evidence in open court in the case. Such exposure with the boycotting and persecution which ensue, prevents others, especially those who act as secret agents through patriotism for the Government, from coming forward to give information.

In war a nation is passing through a great crisis. Espionage must, therefore, at all costs be suppressed; and a person even suspected of spying must be restrained, or grave results may follow to the whole nation.

Individual interests must give place to national interests. It must be taken as a axiom that the risk of doing an individual an injustice must be run, rather than that person, probably an enemy, be left in a position in which he can do harm.

Suspicious characters must be arrested and detained until their innocence is clearly established, or until the end of the war. The merest suspicion must be sufficient for action, and the burden of proof should rest with the suspect. Hence civil law is inadequate, and the civil authorities are unable, even if they recognise the necessity, to take the necessary action; and of course, men who are notorious spies are left at large to do their worst.

Secrecy is a main factor in success. There can, however, be no secrecy where the enemy's spies, working with perfect freedom, infest every town, railway station, or even the Government departments.

It is just as much a strategical mistake to allow the enemy's spies perfect freedom, as it is to permit, when it can be prevented, the enemy's cavalry, the strategic arm, to penetrate through the outposts and examine the dispositions of the force; for by so doing a strong weapon which might be easily removed is left in the hands of the enemy; and of such is faulty strategy.

Faulty strategy costs the blood of soldiers; and there is no excuse for the faulty strategy which fails to proclaim martial law.

Under martial law the inhabitants are placed under certain restraints; and complete freedom of movement is denied, especially to those who may be suspected of assisting the enemy. Those against whom there is suspicion, amounting to moral proof, can be incarcerated for such time as may be necessary, and according to the power of ill possessed by the supposed delinquent.

Proof on which actual sentence of punishment can be passed is the same, whether under civil or martial law; it is only in the very last straits that men are hanged right and left, or shot down in batches, to strike terror at all costs into an inimical populace.

Under martial law a man may not be shot or hanged on insufficient evidence; but he may be incarcerated, or restrained, until such time as his liberty may no longer be hurtful to national interests—that is, till the end of the war.

A Boer military court, trying a man for high

treason, found that he was not guilty, but that he, being an undesirable, should be imprisoned indefinitely. In other words, the offender, though no actual charge could be proved against him, was placed in a position in which he could do no harm to the great national cause.

Justice! injustice! What are such things when the national existence is at stake?

Soldiers' lives are thrown away by the thousand in payment for ignorance, prejudice, or mere stupidity; and a citizen whom there is good reason to believe is an enemy may not be shut up to keep him out of harm's way, lest the great principle of freedom be infringed.

That nation which leaves its enemy's spies and adherents liberty of action owing to a perverted sense of justice, is the exponent not of freedom but of licence; and, besides, demonstrates its ineptitude to the whole world.

* * * * * *

Under representative government the Press enjoys full liberty, and may publish whatsoever it pleases, provided only it refrains from obscenity and blasphemy.

In peace-time the morals of the nation must be cared for, and legislation, by means of which indecency or blasphemy in the public Press can be suppressed, is just and right.

In war, however, when the national existence is at stake, mere indecency or mere blasphemy sink into insignificance; for neither the one nor the other

affect the great main issue of success on the battle-field.

The publication of sedition, of the speeches of disloyal politicians, of debates in the Houses of Legislature which show that the nation is not of one mind, tend to depress the generals or admirals directing operations, and even the rank and file, while they proportionately elate the enemy.

Criticism of generals appearing in the public Press tends to destroy the confidence of an army in its chiefs, and even to destroy the confidence of those chiefs themselves; for the rank and file are unaware that such criticisms emanate from men who must be either ignorant or disloyal;* while generals are but human, and fear an abusive and ignorant Press more, possibly, than they fear the enemy.

All these seditious and pernicious publications have a distinct bearing on success or failure on the battle-field. They cost the blood of soldiers, and may be the featherweight to turn the scales of victory or defeat against the country.

Compared with these, blasphemy and indecency, though doubtless exceedingly reprehensible, are matters of no concern. But under civil law, in this instance as in all else, internal and trifling questions, secondary considerations, are legislated for, while consideration of weightier national matters is omitted.

* If the criticism is made without recognition of the fact that it must be subversive of discipline, it must emanate from ignorant persons; if made in recognition of the fact, it must be due to disloyalty.

Yes, the publication of matter which tends to assist the enemy, which tends to bring defeat and death on the soldiers of the country, is a matter of great national urgency; and a national Press which is permitted or permits itself such licence is, in fact, the enemy of its country.

* * * * * *

Civil law is in every way too slow and cumbrous in its operations.

Punishment is not meted out to an offender from a base spirit of revenge, but as an example to deter others. Punishment is the better deterrent when it follows sharply and surely on the footsteps of crime.

In war-time, when men's passions and prejudices are fully aroused, military offences—that is, offences which in any way assist the adversary—will, if not sternly suppressed, increase with extraordinary rapidity. A few weeks, and no military operations can be conducted with hope of success from a centre in which such military offenders are permitted free play.

Some of these offences are:—

Selling or giving liquor to soldiers; trafficking in arms, ammunition, horses, clothes, food, etc., on a small scale; evading petty regulations—petty it may be, but which have, nevertheless, been introduced for the furtherance of military operations.

These offences vary in importance according to the nature of the war; but in a war of annexation, such as the Boer war, where every inhabitant is an

enemy and practically a spy, where the enemy's intrigue is constantly at work to undermine the discipline of the troops, their importance can hardly be overestimated.

Under civil law these are not offences, or, if offences at all, they are regarded as of so mild a character as to be unworthy of any but the mildest form of punishment.

It is in dealing with greater crimes, however, that civil law fails. A criminal must be brought to trial, it may be some months after the commission of the crime; being, probably, allowed freedom on bail in the meantime.

Freedom on bail enables a man to continue his crimes.

Such trade offences as the introduction of munitions of war, the profits of which are so enormous, and of which the detection is so difficult, can only be put down by the severest possible bodily penalties. To grant bail in such a case is worse than useless, and is merely to play with the blood of soldiers.

But civil law exists to defend trade against all comers. Illicit traffic in munitions of war is in wars of annexation, where exhaustion plays so large a part, the most profitable of trade operations, as was clearly to be seen in the War of Secession in America.

In the Boer war, the Boers held out for many months on the munitions of war captured from British troops or introduced into the country.

Trade interests are so large, trade influence is so extensive, and the number of those whose interests may be endangered is so great, that under representative government necessary military measures which strike at illicit trade can only be adopted after a prolonged and bitter struggle. This fact in no wise lessens the necessity for such measures; it merely illustrates the inadaptability of representative government for war.

And notwithstanding the clear necessity for martial law in a country in which military operations are in progress, martial law was only with difficulty proclaimed in the different districts of Cape Colony, generally speaking, contemporarily with the arrival of the Boers.* It was not proclaimed in the Cape ports, the places of all others where it should have been proclaimed, until towards the end of 1901—that is, after two years of war.

The operations of war, especially in hostile territory, inexorably demand a display of the utmost severity towards the inimical population; leniency is a weakness, and is out of place in a war when success depends on strength and determination. The display of weakness is a strategical fault which must be paid for by the blood of one's countrymen and comrades.

* The horses of inhabitants known to be of a rebellious tendency could only be taken from them under martial law. The delay in the declaration of martial law meant, therefore, that the Boers would gain all the horses in the district. The existence of the Boer Commandoes depended upon horses.

There are, however, two sides to this question. In a war of annexation the conciliation of the inhabitants is obviously desirable, and it must be the object of the conqueror to convert hostility to friendship. But friendship is impossible without respect, and the basis of respect is fear. A display of weakness can gain neither respect nor friendship. And to permit the enemy's spies and adherents the freedom of movement and action which is inseparable from civil law, is a weakness which is clearly apparent to the inhabitants of a country in a state of war. Such a course will not only not gain the respect of the hostile population, but will alienate the affections of the friendly portion. Severity will, on the other hand, as was clearly shown in the Boer war, quickly check the spread of intrigue or rebellion, and will thereby save the lives of soldiers. No soldier, least of all a British soldier, will object to the sacrifice of his life for an adequate object; but the attempt to conciliate an unbeaten adversary is palpably futile, and can only gain his contempt. When the enemy is beaten, when the conqueror has his knee on the chest, his grip on the throat of the adversary, then is the time for conciliation. It was only within the last few months of the termination of the war that the Boers recognised the fact that they were beaten; yet efforts at conciliation were commenced by the British from the very beginning of the war. The refusal to employ native troops of the Indian army was the first attempt at conciliation; and this was a wise measure, provided

Great Britain was prepared to put a sufficient number of white troops in the field. Let us clearly grasp the situation. The population of South Africa was divided into two distinct parts; this part for the British race, that part for the Boer race. The Boers had, in the most dastardly manner, secretly attacked the British. There was no fear that the British adherents in South Africa would turn against Great Britain, for their interests were obviously bound up with British interests; it would be fear alone that would force them into the arms of the Boers. The object of Great Britain was to maintain her supremacy in South Africa, and, as a means to this end, her primary object was to retain the devoted loyalty of the British adherents. She could not do this better than by the rapid and decisive defeat of the Boers. Efforts to conciliate the Boers would appear to the British adherents, as they actually did, as fear on the part of Great Britain. It is, indeed, the case that from first to last throughout the war Great Britain, or, rather, the British Government, was afraid; and this fear led it to use its utmost efforts to bring the war to a termination before the enemy was beaten. The refugee camp, and the numerous proclamations which asked the Boers to give in, and which roused the ire of the British soldier—for it brought him into contempt with all—were merely the visible signs of this fear on the part of the British Government, which found expression in the desire for peace at any price.

The British is the only nation in the world which attempts to combine war with exaggerated ideas of humanity; which can prefer to sacrifice the lives of its own men rather than put the enemy to inconvenience; which fails to shoot spies and rebels caught red-handed; which can even despatch hysterical women to report on the conduct of operations.

The lax administration of martial law in the Orange River Colony, and the fact that it was not proclaimed in the Cape ports until even the disloyal population of the latter country cried out for it as the only means to terminate the war, was a disgrace to the British nation.

But still more was it a disgrace to the Cape Government. There was some excuse for the Imperial Cabinet, six thousand miles distant from the theatre of operations; but the Cape Ministry was on the spot. It was their own country which formed the scene of hostilities; Boer intrigue was apparent and notorious; the Boer spy and adherent was everywhere in evidence; certain organs of the daily Press teemed with seditious articles, or with articles directed against British Generals, of which the obvious objects were the propagation of rebellion and the subversion of discipline in the British army; the teaching in the schools was notoriously disloyal, and was on all sides the subject of general comment; the urgent necessity for martial law was clearly apparent to all, save only to open rebels, to secret Boer partisans, and to the Colonial Ministry.

But the existence of representative government must always render martial law to a great extent inoperative; for, and this fact must be borne in mind, Ministers depend entirely on popularity for the retention of their positions, or, it may be, of their salaries. A desire for popularity on the part of a leader of any description is out of place; for no man influenced exclusively by such a desire can hope to do his duty. Volunteer officers in peace govern their men by tact or popularity; discipline is lacking. Tact will always, however, give way to strict discipline and to the sternest measures in the fierce ordeal of war. So in the War of Secession in America, Jackson found it necessary to introduce stern discipline amongst his volunteers, and constantly enforced the death penalty for acts of disobedience, insubordination, and desertion. And the Boers who commenced the war, lacking all discipline, ended by the infliction of the severest penalties on military offenders. It is by discipline, stern discipline alone, whether it be in the ranks of the armed forces or in those of the nation at large, that success in war can be won. A Ministry is, as it were, the leader of a nation; if influenced by the desire for popularity it cannot introduce stringent measures or inflict severe punishments; and for this one reason alone it is out of place in war.

* * * * * *

We have seen that representative government is practically a council of war. It is not only in itself

"divided control," but would appear to diffuse this faulty principle throughout a theatre of war.

Hence the system of leadership in South Africa, the details of which are, of course, well known, is of interest.

The High Commissioner of South Africa was the representative of the King and Government of Great Britain.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Army in South Africa was, apparently, the "servant" of the British Government, and, therefore, presumably the servant of the High Commissioner, a civilian; and, again presumably, subject to his orders.

In the Orange River Colony, the Deputy-Administrator, a civilian, but, at the same time, a major in the army, was the representative of the High Commissioner; while the General commanding the Orange River Colony was the representative of the Commander-in-Chief. The General commanding was, therefore, presumably, subject to the orders of the Deputy-Administrator, the Major.

In Cape Colony the situation stood thus:—

The Governor of the "Colony of the Cape of Good Hope," and "Commander-in-Chief" in Cape Colony, was the representative of, either the High Commissioner in South Africa, or of the King and Government of Great Britain; it is somewhat uncertain which. Being Commander-in-Chief in Cape Colony, he should, of course, have been under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, and

subject to him alone. This was not the case, however, and he would appear to have been an extra Commander-in-Chief, possibly placed there to take command in an emergency.

Besides the Governor, there was a Colonial Ministry which was responsible to the people, often perhaps rebels at heart if not openly, of Cape Colony. It is believed that the Governor exercised a certain nominal control, principally advisory, over the Colonial Ministry.

In addition to these there were the General commanding the mobile columns in Cape Colony, that is, the fighting General, and the General commanding the district organisation of Cape Colony.

The General commanding the columns was senior to the General commanding the district, but had, at the same time, no actual authority over him.

All these would appear to have been actuated by different motives.

The object of the Boer Commandoes was simple; it was to maintain themselves in Cape Colony, and to rouse the inhabitants to rebellion. Being completely outmatched in numbers and armament, but superior to their adversaries in mobility, their method naturally was to avoid serious engagements, and, by means of secrecy and rapidity, to surprise and overwhelm small detachments of British troops. They were dependent on the Boer spying organisation in Cape Colony to furnish them with intelligence, to make the most of their local successes, and to

minimise their defeats, with a view to encouraging rebellion.

The object of the General commanding the troops in Cape Colony was to overtake and capture the Boer Commandoes, and to repress rebellion. His hope of success lay in destroying the mobility of the Boers, in obtaining accurate and quick intelligence of their movements, and in striking them with secrecy and rapidity. As a means to these ends, the clearance of the country of supplies of food and horses, the suppression of the Boer spying organisation, and the improvement of his own Intelligence Department, became matters of primary importance, His troops were, however, fully employed in pursuing the Boers; their numbers were too few to permit of their employment in a systematic clearance of the country, except in those districts actually traversed in pursuit of the Boer Commandoes. The work of clearing the country in those districts into which the Boer had, up to that time, not penetrated, but into which they might shortly be expected to penetrate, devolved upon the General commanding the district, that is, the standing organisation, of Cape Colony.

The Intelligence Department, on which the "Fighting General" depended for his information of the enemy, was a standing organisation, and as such was under the orders of the General commanding the District of Cape Colony.

The administration of martial law, on the stern exercise of which depended the suppression of the

Boer spying organisation, devolved upon the General commanding the district.

It will thus be seen that the "Fighting General" depended for success, to a vast extent, on the way in which the General commanding the district was able to carry out his duties.

The primary object of the General commanding the district was to assist the fighting General to the utmost of his ability; and with this object in view it became, of necessity, his first duty to ensure that the clearance of the country of supplies and horses, and the stern administration of martial law, were efficiently carried out. But he had many other, though necessarily less important, duties to perform. There were garrisons for which he was responsible; and there were departments, such as ordnance, supply, railway, telegraph, post office, embarkation, disembarkation, customs, which went to form the standing organisation, and on the efficient and smooth working of each of which the success of the fighting General, to a great extent, depended. But the post office, telegraphs, and customs were under the Colonial Government, just as though peace reigned supreme throughout the country; while the railways, embarkations, and disembarkations were at all times subject to the partial control of the Government.

The division of control, above set forth, had far-reaching results. An army in modern days is made up of many departments, each one of which deals with a highly technical subject, with which only an

expert can hope to cope. No General in the world, however capable he may be, can do more than learn the leading principles underlying the action of each department; and possibly the details, probably out of date by the time he becomes a General, of one department in which he has had personal experience. It is the case, therefore, that in modern times, more even than in the past, a General must trust his subordinates in command of departments. This fact was clearly recognised in South Africa; and each department was given a chief at army headquarters who was responsible for the efficient working of his department throughout South Africa. Thus an officer in charge of a department in a district, such as the Orange River Colony, found himself responsible to two masters, to his departmental chief at Army Headquarters, and to the General under whom he was serving. In the case of the extremely complicated system of command in Cape Colony, certain departmental heads found themselves responsible to more than two masters.

The remounts, for instance, existed principally to furnish the mobile columns with remounts; but, being a standing organisation, it was under the General commanding the standing organisation, or district, and, at the same time, responsible to its departmental chief at Army Headquarters. When the interests of these three different masters conflicted, to whom should the departmental head in Cape Colony display loyalty?

If the General commanding the mobile columns complained to the Commander-in-Chief of the lack of horses, notwithstanding the fact that large numbers of horses had, in spite of the orders which had been issued to clear all districts, been left in the hands of the disloyal inhabitants, it would be the departmental head, and not so much the General of the district who would bear the brunt of the storm. But this departmental head would clearly have foreseen the eventuality and would certainly have made every effort, if only in self-defence, to requisition these horses. But how should he do so against the will of the General of the district under whom he was actually serving? It is clear that the fault lay with the General of the district; but how should he order the requisitioning of horses against the express wish of the Government of the country, supported, possibly, by the Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Colony? One example is sufficient, but there were other departments equally, if not more, unfortunate.

The objects of the Colonial Government can only be inferred. They should naturally have been identical with those of the General commanding the district; and every other interest, of whatsoever its nature, should without doubt have been subordinated to the determination to assist the Generals in their efforts to deal with the Boers. But the facts are that the Government, in its control of the post office and telegraphs, observed a slavish regard for the Constitution, going so far as to fail to establish

censorship in the post-office before the declaration of martial law, or to employ the telegraph lines solely for military work. Without censorship it was practically impossible to obtain proof against the Boer spies who infested the towns and country: while the mass of civil telegrams interfered to such an extent with military work as to cause serious delay in the despatch of war telegrams. The post office and telegraph office were, moreover, mediums by which Boer communication was greatly facilitated. The action of the Government in this instance was clearly, though unintentionally, of assistance to the Boers.

It is inconceivable that such a course of action was due entirely to ignorance. It can only be that their course of action was dictated by a desire for popularity, as there is no other explanation of it.

Even after the proclamation of martial law, the time of the Government would appear to have been chiefly employed in endeavours to put obstacles in the way of clearing the country of horses and supplies. In doing this they were, unintentionally, playing into the hands of the enemy; and again in this instance we must assume that their course of action was dictated by a desire for popularity.

In the matter of the administration of martial law and the arrest of notorious pro-Boers the efforts of the Government were, unintentionally, directed to checking the action of the military authorities. The necessity for such arrests must have been clearly

apparent to even the most ignorant of men, for the Boer system of espionage was notorious, and was a matter of general comment throughout the country. It was a well-known fact that Boer intrigue had for its object a great organised rising throughout Cape Colony. The action of the Government in this also was evidently actuated by the desire for popularity.

A desire for popularity in such circumstances, and when the populace is, for the greater part, disloyal, is unintentionally not one whit better than simple disloyalty itself.

This Government, with its strong opinions on the liberty of the subject and on the rights of man, unintentionally disregarded the rights of the Empire, subordinated justice to law, and rendered it impossible for the military authorities to cope with the great and growing evil of Boer intrigue.

This Boer intrigue, which carried rebels to the enemy's standard, cost the blood of British soldiers at the time. It did more; for by its education of the masses to rebellion it hoped in the future to render useless the great sacrifices of the British Empire, and to bring about the secession of South Africa from the Empire by constitutional means.

Representative government in Cape Colony was, in fact, a weapon in the hands of the enemy, and as such should have been removed. This fact is clear to all now; it was equally patent to all soldiers in Cape Colony at the time.

The suspension of representative government in

Cape Colony during the Boer war—that is, the removal of a weapon from the hands of the enemy—was a purely strategical question, and as such should undoubtedly have been considered and carried out, by force if need be, by the military authority responsible.

It is, however, but another disadvantage of representative government that it is impossible for the General on the spot, or for any other man, to say whether his is the responsibility, or whether it rests with his civilian government.

A General has many things to think of, and is apt to relegate these questions, as political matters, to the shoulders of political representatives. Such a course is a shifting of responsibility; for it is the General, the man who has trained himself to the study of strategy and to the consideration of such questions, who alone is able to give them their due weight and decide on the course it may be necessary to adopt.

He alone, moreover, has the power to take action, if necessary, by force of arms; and the suspension of the Constitution was at that time a question of the employment of force.

There is no time in war to deal with matters of great urgency by tactful methods. Waste of time involves waste of blood; and it would seem to have been in diplomatic dealings with this Government that the time of the General was fully occupied to the detriment of his proper work. His every effort

to do his duty in these vital matters would seem to have been checked and hampered by this representative government; and it was by the exercise of tact, constant tact, alone that he could obtain sanction to carry out the most necessary of military measures.

Obtain sanction! Yes, that is what it has come to! The General to obtain sanction from a government of civilians, the representatives of a population in sympathy, for the greater part, with the enemy!

The difficulties of the General commanding the district can hardly be overestimated.

His was the duty of reconciling the various conflicting interests of all; of supporting and assisting the fighting General to the utmost of his ability; of checking the impetuosity of the head of this department; of spurring to activity the head of that department; of smoothing friction where interests clashed. Was this not enough? Was there no measure of tact required in the performance of this duty that he should have had other and unnecessary work thrust upon him?

But his also was the duty of combating the Colonial Ministry when it, in its folly or self-interestedness—it matters not which—interfered with and hampered the work of departments on whose well-directed efforts success or failure depended. On him fell the duty of teaching these ignorant or self-interested men—it matters not which—men refusing to be taught, the very rudiments of the art of war. On him fell the

duty, the constant strain, of the hopeless endeavour to reconcile the conflicting interests of the British Empire and of the local Ministry.

Put shortly, the whole case in reality stood thus. An enemy had attacked and attempted to wrest a British colony from the British Empire. The majority of the people of this colony was disloyal to the Empire, a considerable portion being in open revolt. The Government of the colony, knowing that on its popularity with the majority of the people would depend its retention of power in the near future, was necessarily concerned principally with the desire to win such popularity. Such a desire necessitated the adoption of a course of action which would be in favour with the disloyal majority—that is, with the enemy. Thus we have a Government, each member of which was, in all probability, loyal to the Empire, unintentionally acting in a hostile manner—as an enemy, in fact. Yet this same Government was, as it were, a part of the Government of the British nation, cognisant of the intentions of and holding considerable influence both with the British Government and with British Generals. Thus the British counsels could be swayed, and its plans modified by the enemy through the Colonial Government. And it was impossible for British Generals, responsible for success or failure, to remove this powerful lever from the hands of the enemy. It was possible only provided the majority of the people willed its removal; but the majority was an enemy, and wished no better

than to retain this weapon in its own hands. The loyal minority cried out for the removal of this weapon; but it was a minority, and as such held no influence. The whole situation was an absurdity possible only to representative government—an absurdity which has cost the lives of British soldiers, and perhaps more.

The Colonial Government was a weapon in the hands of the enemy.

How should the General reconcile the conflicting interests of friends and enemies? Tact? No pugilist ever yet won a fight by the display of tact. The display of tact towards an enemy in open conflict is a weakness. Did Nelson display tact towards Villeneuve? Did Napoleon display tact towards the Germans at Jena, or towards the Austrians at Austerlitz? Did Wellington display tact towards Napoleon at Waterloo? The display of tact on the field of battle by the soldier towards the enemy is usually termed cowardice. Soldiers in time of war have their duty to do; they have no time for the display of tact towards the enemy or the tools of the enemy. Their country demands their time; on their energy and determination depend success or failure; on their unwavering attention to their work, on their constant thought by day and night of new methods by which their work shall be improved and by which the enemy shall be disconcerted, rest the lives of their comrades.

Tact! tact! tact! There would be less necessity

for tact were all actuated by one motive—a single-minded devotion to the interests of the fatherland.

Here was a country shaken to its very foundations by a war; its people animated by the bitterest race hatred; intrigue rife; sedition taught in the schools; a large party of irreconcilables determined, at all costs, to maintain and extend the war, and to continue the strife after the cessation of actual hostilities. And these irreconcilables might well, if granted freedom of action, yet succeed in their objects, and relight the torch of war in the years to come. And this was a British colony, on the loyalty of which the existence of the Empire would most certainly in the future depend. A form of government which might bring rest and peace to the miserable country and under which irreconcilables and firebrands might be held in subjection was urgently desirable. The bickerings of party politics, the interested motives of the professional politician, the pandering to the worst features of popular prejudice, which are amongst the principal traits of responsible government, could only tend to accentuate the bitterness left behind by the war. Great Britain's duty to the loyal minority demanded the suspension of the Constitution; for the Colonial Government was as a weapon in the hands of the enemy.

That this Government was permitted to remain in power was, there can be no doubt, a grave strategical error, and a costly one, as is even now becoming apparent.

Strategy demanded that the Constitution should be suspended. Political considerations, publicly discussed, put forward principally by Boer intrigue, and, it would seem, by the friends of the Colonial Ministry, demanded otherwise. They are worth giving, if only to show how puerile political considerations can be. They are as follows:—

1. Great Britain undertook the war to rescue British subjects in the Transvaal from slavery, and to gain for them freedom and a free Constitution. How, therefore, such being her avowed objects, could she suspend the Constitution of Cape Colony?

Great Britain did not undertake the war in the interests of her subjects in the Transvaal; she undertook it to avoid being driven from South Africa. The majority of the people of Cape Colony had assisted the Boers in every possible way; they had utilised the Constitution granted to the country to strike secretly at the British Empire. Why should this country receive more consideration than the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, which had at the least fought openly? She had shown by her actions that she was unfit to be trusted with a Constitution.

2. Representative government has become a watchword of the British nation; the nation has an intense dislike of military rule.

This is a purely sentimental argument; history teaches that, when sentimental ideas are permitted to override military exigencies, the error exacts heavy payment in blood and money.

3. A Bill of Indemnity is necessary to legalise the acts committed by the British army in Cape Colony; a Constitution is necessary before such Bill can be passed; and such act must be passed by the Colonial Government.

This argument was an entirely secondary consideration, and what would have been the nature of the crisis had the Colonial Government refused to pass the Bill of Indemnification? Such a matter could quite well have been left until the end of the war. It was in no case a matter of sufficient importance to justify the unnecessary sacrifice of the blood of British soldiers and grave risk to the Empire.

4. That European nations may use the suspension of representative government as an excuse for intervention. When European nations intend to intervene excuses will not be wanting, and one more or less will be of no importance.

There was one more reason which was not discussed at the time, but which was in reality the only cogent one:—

5. Would other British Colonies agree to the suspension of the Constitution in a colony?

Yes, if their leaders had been clearly shown that the lives of their soldiers were being needlessly sacrificed to this fetish of a Constitution. Cape Colony was, so to speak, a stripling of the great British family, which, falling amongst bad company, had made an ill use of the liberty granted by its

parent; and it was desirable to bring it again, if only temporarily, into leading-strings.

All these reasons are so childish that it is absurd to suppose that the Colonial Ministry was permitted to remain in power on account of any one or all of them. The true reason why the necessary action was not taken must be sought elsewhere. It probably was, lest a precedent should be established that a Constitution could be suspended. With such a precedent, the existence of no party government would be entirely safe in a time of great national emergency; and party politicians would naturally do their utmost to avoid establishing such a precedent.* What matters the lives of soldiers and the defeat of the country, when such important interests are at stake?

Whatever may have been the reasons, the Colonial Ministry was permitted to remain in power. It was a strategical mistake, the end of which cannot even now be foreseen. On whom must the responsibility rest?

No man can say; for the extraordinary jumble and division of control is surely unparalleled in history, except, it may be, in the history of such countries as China, or possibly the "moribund" nation Spain.

It was the British Constitution which really was in fault; it was the British Government which was guilty of moral cowardice, or worse.

Moral cowardice is to physical cowardice as three

* Mr. Chamberlain has stated in Cape Colony that a Constitution once granted cannot be taken away; but cannot it be altered?

to one; physical cowardice in the soldier is punished with death.

The method by which the General could alone have efficiently dealt with the situation was by force, by the employment of his troops for the removal of all civilian control and the declaration of martial law. But such action on the part of the General would have been in direct violation of all the principles of the British Constitution; and he would have found himself in opposition to the British Ministry in Great Britain, which could ill brook the removal, under any stress of circumstances, even of a disloyal Ministry, much less of one that was merely ignorant or self-interested.

But there is a time for all things. In September, 1901, before the proclamation of martial law in the Cape ports, the Boers actually penetrated to Darling, some twenty to thirty miles north of Cape Town. Cape Town was the principal base of operations of the army in South Africa, and the slightest threat against such a base was more than sufficient to justify any course necessary to ensure its absolute security. The General of the district, or even the Base Commandant, responsible for the security of the base, would have been more than justified in proclaiming martial law over the heads of the Government and even of the Governor, and supporting his proclamation, if necessary, by force.

A "most serious" step it would doubtless be termed On the contrary, the serious step lay in

permitting the base of operations to be threatened by the enemy, and taking into consideration, the large numbers of disloyal people in Cape Town—it was seriously threatened—without the adoption of that most elementary step for its defence, a proclamation of martial law.

Such action accomplished would undoubtedly have been upheld by the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa; and the Government of Great Britain would have been put to it to find cause of just complaint with the responsible soldier. But the responsible soldier would nevertheless have been ruined. It is unfair to give any soldier the following alternative:—"To do his duty fearlessly to his country and irreparably to ruin his career; or to neglect his duty." Yet such is the alternative with which many a British soldier in the Boer war has found himself face to face.

* * * * * *

Strategy is the preliminary operation which culminates in the tactics of the field of battle.

When armies are face to face on the field of battle the General's mind must for the time being be divested of all thoughts of the strategy of the campaign, and occupied solely with the tactical situation and with the means by which he intends to wrest victory from fortune and from the enemy. For tactical defeat means in most cases strategical defeat.

And so, on the actual outbreak of war, which is the culminating point of peace strategy, all thoughts

must be centred on the strategical situation and on the determination to win the war at all costs.

War is the critical moment in the life of a nation; and all considerations, other than those purely military, must be set aside until success has been achieved.

But this is impossible under a purely representative government. As has been said, it is impossible, inasmuch as the Government fears the Opposition, fears the outcry of free-lance politicians, fears popular clamour, faddists, the Press, and, indeed, every imaginary shadow. Any government which depends for its power entirely on popularity, is, from the nature of things, unstable. It is ill-changing horses in the midst of a stream, and it is ill-changing governments in the midst of war.

The primary duty of an unstable government, when the nation is at war, is to maintain its own supremacy. It can only do so by giving its whole attention to the politics by which it is maintained in power; but this necessitates disregard, and even fotgetfulness, of the war.

In war time, the only government worthy of the name is one which can give its undivided attention to the war without fear of being ousted from its position, and which can yet leave its General a free hand to conduct the war.

Such a government is only to be found in one supported by the bayonets of soldiers acting under martial law.

No government can ever be secure under purely representative government.

No government, whose position is insecure, can do its duty irrespective of the desires or fads of the populace and Press.

Rebellion was, in the past, considered, even in Great Britain, as the worst crime that man could commit. Elsewhere in the world it is still so considered, and death is the one and only penalty. The British people have, however, become so familiar with the covert rebellion of the South and West of Ireland, that to them it is practically a matter of but little concern. The fact is disregarded that this covert rebellion will, almost certainly, when the time comes that Great Britain is at the last gasp in her struggle with some powerful adversary, break into active rebellion, provided such a course can be adopted with comparative safety to the rebels.

At the commencement of the Boer war Cape Colony was in a state of covert rebellion, prepared to break into active rebellion, provided the would-be rebels could see their way clear to do so with comparative safety.

The presence of a Boer Commando was considered the visible sign that safety lay in rebellion; and wherever a Boer Commando penetrated, there did covert break into active rebellion.

Display of weakness on the part of Great Britain in coping with this rebellion was to the would-be rebels a sure sign of fear on the part of Great

Britain, and of ultimate success on the part of the Boer.

Strength in the treatment of rebels was, on the other hand, a sign of confidence on the part of Great Britain, and would clearly show the would-be rebels that safety lay in refraining from active rebellion.

At the commencement of the war it was Great Britain's object to prevent, at all costs, a great blaze of rebellion in Cape Colony.

It was, presumably, similarly the object of the Cape Government. All history shows that in such a case severity is the only effective course to adopt, for magnanimity is construed into weakness. Count Yorcke von Wartenburg in his "Napoleon as a General," quotes Napoleon as follows:—

"No ridiculous leniency; we shall always have time to be generous." "We wage war in all its severity."

And, again, he writes in connection with the defence of Hamburg by the French:—

"Resistance of this sort can only result from the greatest perseverance, steadfastness, and energy, coupled with the utmost severity against the civil inhabitants of the place. And if these latter, as was the case in Hamburg, are hostile to the garrison, the severity will have to be increased, and the people kept in terror, if necessary. A country cannot be permanently ruled by terror, as is proved by the French Revolution; but a country, and still

more a fortified place, easily can be, while the war lasts, and even in our modern wars, in which the whole population of the country invaded by the enemy is ready to take a share, to rule by terror is indispensable." *

There is, however, an argument which is constantly adopted by those who have not sufficiently studied military history or human nature; it is to the effect that political martyrs cause rebellion, and that in suppressing rebellion care should be taken that rebels be not permitted to pose as martyrs. This argument, therefore, lays down that the extreme penalty should not be enforced for rebellion.

This argument is false.

History notices the few martyrs who, from time to time, have laid down their lives for their principles; it fails to notice, however, the millions of men who have discarded their principles rather than lay down their lives. A martyr is half hero, half fool, and wholly fanatic. Such men are the vagaries of human nature, they are not of the stuff of which the bulk of human nature is made. It may be taken for granted that the example of martyrdom, far from inducing the great mass of men to follow it, leads them carefully to refrain from running any risk of winning the crown. It was not the few men in Cape Colony, half fool, half hero, and wholly fanatic, whom it was desirable to prevent breaking into open rebellion; it was the great mass of men

* "Napoleon as a General," vol. ii., pp. 266-267.

of common sense. The death penalty for rebellion carried out in every case might have sent a few fanatics to join the Boers; it would undoubtedly have kept the mass of the people quiet.

And yet the Cape Government penalised rebellion with five years' loss of franchise. It was this which led disloyal Cape Colonists, as a whole, to regard rebellion against Great Britain and the murder of British soldiers in the light of a pastime.

It was not fear of the spread of rebellion which caused such lamentable weakness; but it was fear of the Opposition, fear of the clamour of the populace, fear of the loss of power, and, more than all, most obviously, the desire to secure an indefinite lease of power by the withdrawal of the vote from those who would in the future undoubtedly vote against the Government. The idea that the true policy was the display of leniency towards rebels was principally promoted by rebel leaders, secret and otherwise—members of the Government or Houses of Legislature or otherwise. It was merely one of the numerous dodges to assist the Boers, with which British soldiers afterwards became so familiar.

The Cape Government failed egregiously in its duty, as all such governments will fail. Its members must, for this offence alone, bear the responsibility for the lives of many Boers and rebel Cape Colonists, and worse, far worse, though not perhaps in their estimation, the blood of many of their own fellow-countrymen.

The most ordinary military measures, without the adoption of which war operations can only be carried out successfully with the expenditure of a vast deal of unnecessary blood, are impossible under representative government. After Lord Roberts's rapid march to Pretoria, the Boers were in so demoralised a condition that, had the country been effectively occupied, and the most simple and necessary military measure of martial law in Cape Colony and in Great Britain been adopted, the war would indeed have been at an end.

There is some small excuse for the people of Great Britain; for how should a nation which is entirely ignorant of war, of what it means, and of how it should be conducted, a country, moreover, far removed from the actual theatre of war, deliberately adopt a measure which would militate against its own comfort?

And yet to a soldier who has given thought to the question the matter is simple.

Are rebel politicians, enemies to their country, to be permitted to rise in the House of Legislature, and to make speeches, in which they pray for the defeat of their countrymen? Under representative government the answer is, yes; for it is an axiom of representative government that every man shall have perfect liberty to give vent to his own opinions, no matter how inimical those opinions may be to the general welfare, and no matter what crisis the nation may be passing through. The soldier and

sailor must alone be tongue-tied, even when speech is necessary for the good of the country.

Mob government is, in war, almost preferable to representative government, for the mob seize traitors who openly glory in their shame and hang them.

Are enemy's spies to be permitted perfect freedom of movement and action? Is the suborned Press to be allowed to express itself as it chooses? The answer is to both questions, under representative government, yes.

Martial law, or at the least a modified form, is an obvious military measure, which is a necessity if a nation would properly conduct war.

An Englishman may well ask himself what is loyalty? what is disloyalty? Is he who disregards national interests in favour of his private interests disloyal? Is that political party which casts aside all thoughts of national interests in favour of party interests disloyal? Is that government which disregards national interests in its efforts to maintain itself in power at all costs disloyal?

In war-time when a nation's fate hangs in the balance, there can be no question but that the responsible soldier should, by force if necessary, remove from power those civilian rulers who, by their ignorance, selfishness, or disloyalty, are bringing death to their countrymen and defeat to their country. Ignorance in men in leading positions is, in war-time, criminal equally with the deliberate

perpetration of crime. Ignorant men, in war-time, should, equally with disloyal men, be removed from positions in which they can do harm.

The exact course to be adopted, and whether or no force must be employed must depend upon the nature of the crisis, and can only be determined by the man on the spot; but at all cost the necessary action must be taken.

A General owes a divided duty: to his country, and to the men under his command, for whose lives he is responsible.

* * * * * *

Before completing this part, let us glance at the experience of Rome in its early struggles.

"Now this was one of the reasons why Brutus and the rest made two consuls instead of one king; for they said that neither one would allow the other to become a tyrant; and since they held office only for one year, they might be called on to give an account of their government when their year was at an end.

"Yet though this was a safeguard of liberty in times of peace, it was hurtful in times of war; for the consuls chosen by the people were not always skilful generals; or, if they were so, they were obliged to lay down their commands at the year's end.

"So the Senate determined in cases of great danger to call upon one of the consuls to appoint a single chief, who should be called dictator, or master of the people. He had sovereign power

(*imperium*) both in the city and out of the city, and the fasces were carried before him with axes in them as before the king. He was appointed only for six months, but at the end of the time he had to give no account; so that he was free to act according to his judgment, having no colleague to thwart him at the present time, and no accusation to fear for the future. He was general-in-chief, and he appointed an officer to command the knights, who was called master of the horse." *

Here, in the two consuls, we see the epitome of party government, with all its advantages and disadvantages.

Here too, in 501 B.C., we see the measures adopted by a tribe constantly fighting for its existence, and which, having recognised the fact that liberty in times of peace, though much to be desired, was but a poor equivalent for failure in war, adopted these measures to counterbalance the disadvantages of party government. It is interesting to note that the appointment of dictator practically carried with it a proclamation of martial law, together with the necessary Act of Indemnification after the war.

And again, a hundred years later, we read that Rome was at war with the Veientines, and her armies besieged Veii.†

"But the siege lasted several years without any progress on the part of the Romans. They were

* Smith's "Rome," p. 55.
† *Ibid.*, p. 110.

unused to the work of a regular siege; and in 396 the people of Capena and Falerii, who had now taken part with Veii, attacked and defeated them. A panic spread from the army to Rome; the matrons crowded to the temples; the Senate met and ordered that a dictator should be appointed."

The result was the immediate capture of Veii and the end of the war.

In other words, the appointment of a dictator with supreme control, and with the power of the nation at his back, brought about the rapid termination of a war which had lingered on for years. If we read history aright, the correct course for any nation with representative government to adopt, when defeat stares it in the face, is to appoint a dictator, and that dictator should be the King or the best soldier available.

But we must now look at the other side of the picture. After some years of peace the dictator was forced to leave the city, apparently for abuse of power. Again we see the struggle between liberty and a form of government suitable for war purposes.

The idea of despotism, and a military despotism especially, is hideous to the human mind; but it is a necessity if war is to be energetically prosecuted, and if success is to be gained.

A military despotism which consists of a whole nation in arms, each man of which is as it were his own despot in peace-time and in matters connected purely with his personal comfort, but who is a

disciplined member of a great force wielded by the head of the nation in war, is not, it would seem, in reality despotism.

The German nation appears to have succeeded where the Romans failed, inasmuch as it would seem to have found a form of government which is not incompatible either with success in war or with true liberty. All other nations liable at any moment to invasion have followed its lead.

Is the British nation not liable to invasion?

PART III

GREAT BRITAIN AND WAR

CHAPTER X

THE OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE

Historical Retrospect—The Illustration afforded by Rome and Carthage.

THE great figures which stand out in the pages of history are those of the men, who were both statesmen and soldiers; soldiers first and statesmen afterwards; men, who with their knowledge of war, led nations to greatness.

In every case their statesmanship was based upon the strategy they had learnt and employed in their wars. They would appear to have recognised in good time that war was inevitable, and once having grasped the fact, to have permitted no secondary considerations to interfere with their preparation for, or prosecution of, the war according to the dictates of strategy.

Alexander the Great, Hannibal, Cæsar, Charlemagne, Alfred the Great, Edward I. and III., Frederick the Great, Peter the Great, Louis XIV., Cromwell, William III., Washington, Napoleon, and lastly Bismarck and Moltke. To these men the mere soldier or the mere statesman takes but a secondary

place. In ancient times, when war was the principal occupation of a nation, as of a man, it is easy to understand that the nation which would be great must be a military nation first, and a commercial nation afterwards. But in modern times, when social and commercial problems have become so complex and so important as to take the first place in the life of a nation, thought of war being in danger of relegation to the background, it is more difficult to grasp the fact that a nation must depend for greatness on success in war.

Nations cannot rise to greatness without success in war. It would appear that nations which fail in war, or which do not exercise themselves in war, will surely become demoralised and sink into insignificance. It is ambition in nations, as in men, which points upwards through the paths of war. Life is impossible without constant exertion.

Spain, having become mistress of the world, was content to sit down in her luxury, to enjoy her ease; she shortly began to sink. All history, indeed, teaches the same lesson; no nation can remain stationary; it must rise or fall. Rise is consequent on constant struggles for life, and fall, on sloth and disease engendered by long peace and too much ease. A nation must work as must a man, or be content to sink into insignificance. In the life of a great nation a war, if it can be dignified by such a name, against a half-armed savage race, is no more a struggle worthy of its strength than is a game of croquet

an effort worthy of the strength of a man. It is through struggles in which the whole strength of a nation is put forth, when, so to speak, the sweat streams from the brow, that a nation can rise to greatness, or, having so risen, can maintain itself and rise yet higher. And success in war, on which depends greatness, is possible only when the first thought of the nation has been preparation for war, when all secondary considerations are put aside, not merely when war becomes imminent, but at all times.

And so it has ever been in the history of the world; and so, if history speaks truth, it must ever be.

Rome, vicious from indolence, fell an easy victim to barbarians. The Empire of Byzantium, giving no thought to war, was destroyed by the Turks. Spain, soft through ease and comfort, content with her world commerce as a source of luxury, fell a victim to a hardier race of sea rovers.

Young and energetic nations rise up day by day in the life of the world to wrest the sceptre of greatness from the inept hands of the old slothful and incompetent nations; and it is only by the constant study of and preparation for war that the vigour of an old nation can be so maintained as will enable it to cope with its adversaries. It is surely owing to this reason that the great men of the world have been soldiers as well as statesmen. It is their knowledge of war that has caused them to recognise the fact that war is a necessity of existence. It is owing to their recognition of this fact that they have put war first;

and it is owing to their constant study of and preparation for war that they have been able to lead their country to greatness.

Assuming that it was in the time of Queen Elizabeth that Great Britain really came to the front as one of the leading nations of the world, we may make the following notes :—

A nation of sea rovers, hardy, determined, and with apparently but little sense of right and wrong, she won a difficult existence from the sea, and by preying upon the commerce of Spain, the great Empire of the day.

Attacked by the great Spanish Armada, she defeated it, and struck the first blow which ultimately led to the downfall of the Spanish dominion. The decisive blows which laid low the Spaniard were, however, struck by other nations on land and not on the sea.

During the next half-century took place the preliminary struggle in Great Britain between autocratic and representative government.

This preliminary struggle resulted in the inevitable military despotism.

During this military despotism Great Britain again turned her attention to the outside world, and, under the able and autocratic leadership of Cromwell, temporarily wrested the supremacy of the sea from the rising Dutch nation. France had in the meanwhile taken the leadership of the Latin nations, and was becoming a great and growing danger both to Great Britain and to Holland.

Peace was ultimately established between British and Dutch by the accession of a Dutch Prince to the British throne.

Hand in hand, as nations closely allied in blood should be, British and Dutch, assisted by the North Germans, fought and defeated their hereditary enemy, the French.

It was in these wars that, gaining undisputed supremacy on the sea, Great Britain laid the seed of her future greatness; and, it may be, through neglect of her army, of her future downfall.

William III. had been an autocrat in military matters; but after his death, being succeeded by a queen, even this small vestige of power was removed by the people from the hands of the crown.

The decisive blows against France were struck, not on the sea, but on the land; and in these decisive blows Great Britain, beyond the fact that she furnished the great general of the age, Marlborough, bore but a small share.

With the conclusion of peace internal troubles arose; the American colonies revolted, and France with Spain again seized the opportunity to attack Great Britain.

A long and bitter struggle ensued. Great Britain, defeated on the sea, found herself open to invasion. But the adversaries subordinated strategy to sentiment, and, in place of striking at the heart of Great Britain, wasted their time in a vain attempt to capture Gibraltar. Great Britain ultimately regained

supremacy on the sea, and could strike back at her enemy. Having little or no army she was, however, unable to do so, and was content, as always, to allow other nations to do it for her or to leave it undone. Shortly after this war came the great French Revolution, followed by the inevitable military despotism; in this case an approximation to a "nation in arms"; for the French people were actuated by the wildest enthusiasm, struggling against the world, and led by the greatest soldier of modern times.

Great Britain was the last Power to enter into the great struggle against France. When she did, however, her superiority on the sea practically gave her immunity from attack, and enabled her to seize French colonies and to amass wealth.

The absence of an army worthy of the name, however, rendered her powerless to strike a decisive blow at her adversary. Other nations, suffering terribly from the heavy blows delivered by France, gave in one by one, and being induced by subsidies from Great Britain to re-enter the arena, were again and again defeated.

The great French autocrat with a nation in arms behind him at last found himself, Europe being at his feet, able to give his undivided attention to Great Britain. He was in possession of an army with which to strike the death-blow, provided he could reach across the sea to strike with it. He, however, lacked the command of the sea. He hoped by masterly strategy to neutralise the disadvantages of inferiority

in material strength, in training, and in morale, and to wrest the local command of the sea from Great Britain, for such time as would enable him to transport his army across with which to strike the death-blow.

It was a simple scheme, but, like all Napoleon's schemes, it was great in its simplicity and contained all the elements of success. He wished to strike at England; his objects, therefore, were: to mislead Great Britain as to his object; to decoy the British fleets from the Channel; to concentrate his own fleets in the Channel suddenly and unexpectedly, his army being ready to cross at a moment's notice. The French Mediterranean fleet, under Villeneuve, was ordered to sail to the West Indies, as if with a view to attacking the British West India possessions. This was the decoy; and Villeneuve, having reached the West Indies, was to return as rapidly as possible to join the French Channel fleet at Brest. The combined fleets were then to convey the army across the Channel. The decoy answered admirably; Nelson hurried to the West Indies in pursuit of Villeneuve. Here he found that Villeneuve had returned to European waters, and his trained intellect instantly grasped Napoleon's scheme. He returned straight to England, if possible to reach the Channel in time for the decisive moment. Villeneuve had been baffled in his return across the Atlantic by adverse winds; and this, together with the knowledge of the bad seamanship of his sailors, caused his heart to fail

him. His bad luck and his lack of moral courage ruined Napoleon's plan.

We see Great Britain, for the first time since the Spanish Armada, face to face with the probability of a great struggle for existence in her own country.

The steps she took to meet this grave crisis were totally inadequate. In place of a great *levée en masse*; in place of arming, organising, and training every able-bodied man in the nation with the utmost possible expedition, she called for volunteers. Some thousands were obtained—untrained, unarmed, unorganised, and without leaders. The means by which Great Britain proposed to resist Napoleon and his perfect military machine were childish in the extreme.

When an untrained and undisciplined nation is invaded by a trained and disciplined army it is a *levée en masse*, a nation in arms, alone that can save it. Ignorance, lack of discipline, faulty training, absence of leaders, must in a crisis be replaced as far as is possible by numbers. Though a bad alternative, it is yet the only one.

Owing, in great part, to Nelson's brilliant dash, good seamanship, and strategy, and to the moral cowardice of the French admiral Villeneuve, but owing more than all else to the British extreme good fortune, Napoleon's scheme—by which he hoped to obtain temporary command of the sea, the necessary preliminary to the delivery of the home-thrust with his army, by which he should lay his enemy at his feet—broke down. It was extreme good luck, such

luck as can be expected to occur but once in the life of a nation, such luck as should never be reckoned upon. It is probable that had steam existed in those days, Napoleon would have succeeded. Difficulties with Austria, however, put an end to Napoleon's scheme; while the battle of Trafalgar decided once for all the question of supremacy on the sea.

Thenceforward Great Britain held immunity from attack, but was unable without an army to give the *coup de grace* to her adversary. She successfully roused the whole of Europe against Napoleon. Had she possessed an army of a hundred thousand to a hundred and fifty thousand men with which to strike, she could almost at any moment after Trafalgar have delivered the death-blow in France itself to her hereditary enemy, the French. A great invasion of exhausted France from across the sea would have struck in with immediate and decisive effect. Great Britain, however, preferred to muddle away her few men, and to waste her time and energies by going round through Portugal and Spain, while European nations struck the decisive blows.

She, in fact, confined her energies to defence pure and simple; and contented herself with assisting other nations with money, and, to a trifling extent only, with men with which to deliver the blows by which alone Napoleon could be defeated.

The British nation, as it were, a pugilist safe from attack behind a strong barrier, and able at will to step forth and finish the fearful struggle against the

common enemy, preferred to remain practically inactive and to amass wealth. There is no doubt but that Great Britain served her interests the better by the course she adopted; for she consolidated her power on the sea, and seized both the commerce of the world as well as the lion's share of the inhabitable portions of the globe, and European nations paid. The display of pure selfishness in the actions of a nation is certainly correct strategy, for sentiment is out of place in war. But it is wise to face facts; and Englishmen would do well to discard the national conviction that they destroyed Napoleon. Of the two hundred thousand allies at the battle of Waterloo only some thirty-three thousand were British troops. Napoleon succumbed both in 1813 and in 1815 to the blows delivered by European nations. The habit of self-deception which grows on a man grows equally on a nation, and is a dangerous fault; it went far to ruin Napoleon who latterly disregarded facts and believed that which he wished to believe; it has already gone far to ruin Great Britain, which of late years has habitually committed this fault. It is due to over-confidence engendered by the success of the past.

European nations, owing to their constant study of war, and especially of the Napoleonic wars during the last fifty years, now appreciate at their just value the performances of Great Britain in the time of their death struggles. They recognise that they were adroitly made use of to "pull the chestnuts from the

fire." Count Yorcke von Wartenburg writes as follows :—

"The fact that this landing was not effected and England not conquered, is generally considered by historians as the salvation of Europe, for one country at least escaped Napoleon's domination. I do not share this opinion. The states of the Continent suffered at that time too severely and directly from Napoleon's tyranny for them to realise that England had no less exclusively, though in a more practical and more enduring manner, its own interests in view during that time, and by no means those of Europe. Had Napoleon entered England at the head of his army, his strength would on the one hand have been weakened thereby, and the Continent would have preserved greater freedom of action; and on the other hand, England, shaken to its very foundations at home, would not have been able to concentrate, as it did, almost the whole colonial possessions of the world in its own hands, and the continental powers would nowadays have a more equal share of them." *

Hence it is probably the hatred of Great Britain, displayed on both sides, which rose to fever heat in the Boer war. Great Britain need not in the future expect disinterested help from continental nations; and neither need she hope for mercy if defeated.

After the downfall of Napoleon, Great Britain, undisputed mistress of the sea and controlling the commerce of the world, has, with the exception of

* "Napoleon as a General," vol. i., p. 199.

the Crimean war, enjoyed absolute peace;* and has extended her dominion and trade to all corners of the globe.

The Crimean war itself was, from a national point of view, but a trifling episode, undertaken by Great Britain with the correct strategical motive of checking the extension of a future great Power in an undesirable direction. It is chiefly noticeable for the fact that Great Britain attempted to strike her enemy, and that this attempt threw a lurid light on her utter want of all preparation for and ability in the conduct of war.

During this long period of peace Great Britain became confirmed in the false conclusions she had drawn from her previous experience of war. She adopted the false teaching, that provided an island power maintained a fleet numerically vastly superior to any that might defy it, that that island power was safe from attack and therefore safe from defeat, and therefore assured of victory.

The teaching is false; a nation, as a pugilist, can only win when it is prepared to strike its enemy again and again, and yet again, through round after round, taking punishment unflinchingly until the enemy, exhausted and demoralised, falls beaten to the earth. The navy is a purely defensive weapon; it can only strike on the sea—that is, in the case of Great Britain, on its own territory—and drive the

* The Indian mutiny, though a horrible and bitter struggle, was not one which in any way endangered the existence of Great Britain, or of which the result was doubtful.

enemy back to his own country, into which it cannot follow him. But it is only by following an enemy into his own country and forcing him back, delivering blow upon blow, until a vital point is struck, that he can be brought to his knees. Absolute command of the sea secures immunity from attack and opens the road to success; but it is the army alone that can strike the adversary until success is assured. It has been argued that the navy can starve the enemy into submission. Could the navy starve the Boers into submission? Can the navy starve the United States into submission? Can it starve France into submission? Can it blockade the Franco-Spanish frontier, the Franco-Italian frontier, the Franco-German frontier, and the Franco-Belgian frontier? Can it starve Russia into submission? The idea is an absurdity.

The Boers were forced to submit only after a protracted struggle on land; after the whole country had been denuded of supplies, of its inhabitants, and even of its farms and villages.

Great Britain in her desire to avoid all militarism has brought herself to believe that an army is unnecessary, and is prepared to trust to the assistance of other nations to strike the decisive blows, and to the bulwarks of nature, to the sea in the case of Great Britain itself, to mountains in the case of India, and to the desert in the case of Egypt. Natural obstacles have never yet prevented a determined enemy from carrying out his object.

It is the thews and sinews, the manhood of a race

combined with a deliberate offensive against the enemy, that alone will bring victory.

The Boers, even when in superior force, through ignorance commenced the war with defensive tactics; when beaten to their knees with their last hope almost gone, their ablest leaders discarded defence and adopted the most dashing and brilliant offensive tactics. And this was the lesson they had learned from two years' bitter experience of war: that the sole hope of success lies in the offensive.

European nations will not in the future, as in the past, undertake all offensive operations for Great Britain, leaving her the simple task of defending herself and accumulating wealth; they will rather employ their offensive powers against Great Britain, for they have much to win and but little to lose by so doing.

In war it is the country which forms the theatre of operations which suffers. The country of the invader suffers but little in comparison with that of the invaded.

Military operations prolonged through a considerable period in a country will of itself force that country to its knees, unless it can transfer the war to its enemy's territory.

Great Britain exists on her sea-borne commerce; it is her life-blood; and the mere existence of a state of war between Great Britain and another nation of which the theatre of operations is the sea, will drain this life-blood. It is probable that a prolonged

struggle on the sea, or, indeed, the mere existence of an enemy's "fleet in being" with free egress to the sea, will suffice to force Great Britain to her knees. The sea may therefore be said—from the British point of view—to be British territory; warfare on the sea means practically the invasion of British territory, and that Great Britain would be the nation to suffer in a primary degree. It would therefore be Great Britain's object, if she would win, to transfer the war as soon as possible to her enemy's territory. Such a transfer entails the invasion of that enemy's country, no matter who that enemy may be, and, if necessary, without allies. Every day of warfare will bring Great Britain nearer to defeat, and she must invade her adversary the very moment that the success of her fleets puts her in a position to do so. The army with which to strike must be organised and trained before the war, for an ill-organised and ill-led army can hardly hope for success against the trained Continental Powers.

Great Britain can no longer afford to await the outbreak of war before she commences preparation for a stroke at her adversary.

If Great Britain refuses to prepare an army with which to strike her adversary she is doomed to defeat; for it is an immutable principle of strategy that the offensive alone can win. This principle has been taught since the world began, and no better example of its truth can be found than in that presented by the wars between Rome and Carthage.

The Illustration Afforded by Carthage and Rome.

Carthage, the mistress of the seas, and the richest city of the day, required, so she thought, but little in the shape of an army. It is true that she had enemies in her own territories, for her subject tribes were constantly in a state of insurrection. But of war, as war went in those days (other than war against savages), she had but little if any experience. Her thoughts were centred on commerce and on the accumulation of riches. Provided she could keep the command of the sea she need not fear attack. Such immunity from attack can only engender a sense of false security, which in the end must lead to the effeminacy of a race.

Rome, on the other hand, had been engaged in constant struggles for existence; and the nation had in consequence become hardened and experienced in real warfare. She had no commerce to speak of. Her riches, such as she had, had been gained by the sweat of her brow and the defeat of her enemies. She had practically no fleet, and was in no sense of the word a sea power. Her armies had, however, shown themselves to be the finest in the then known world.

To contrast the two nations about to enter on a life-and-death struggle:—

Carthage, a nation of tradesmen and seamen, a great sea power; her armies consisting of militia only, or of mercenaries recruited from foreigners.

Rome, a nation of soldiers only, but a nation whose thoughts were of war, whose constant study was war; compared with Carthage, a pauper nation.

On one side:—

1. Immunity from attack.

2. The power, owing to her command of the sea, of striking at her adversary's very heart, provided she had an army with which to do it.

3. Wealth—that is, staying power.

On the other side:—

1. A national training to arms.

2. The power of warlike thought and, consequently, of invention.

3. An army with which to strike at her adversary's heart, provided she could reach it.

At first glance the issue would appear to be beyond doubt, for the nation with the command of the sea could at least worry the coast-line of the other. The issue would, indeed, have been beyond doubt had Carthage foreseen the vital nature of the struggle before her, and taken the necessary measures to place her whole strength in line at the commencement of the war, and to strike at her adversary's heart. But no! her thoughts were centred on commerce and on the delights of money-making. She was incapable, as all such nations must be, of discarding even temporarily her money-making operations for the sterner operations of war, even as a slothful man is incapable of sudden exertion.

The war lingered on for years in Sicily, Carthage

letting slip her chance of carrying the war to the gates of Rome; while Rome, the nation of warriors, was strenuously preparing a fleet with which to struggle for the command of the sea, and thus place herself in a position to assail Carthage in her vital point. The Carthaginians, in fact, acted on the defensive; the Romans on the offensive.

"Nothing shows the courage and resolution of the Romans more than their manner of acting in this matter. It is no light matter for landsmen to become seamen; but for unpractised landsmen to think of encountering at sea the most skilful seamen then known might have been deemed a piece of romantic absurdity, if the men of Rome had not undertaken and accomplished it." *

The Romans built a fleet and trained their soldiers to become seamen. They attacked, and, by means of a trifling invention, defeated a Carthaginian fleet. But the Romans, in place of striking at the heart of their adversary, were content to reduce the Carthaginian colony in Sicily. Still the Carthaginians failed to recognise their danger and to take the offensive; they remained inactive, and left the initiative in the hands of the Romans. The latter at last attacked and defeated the main Carthaginian fleets, and wrested the command of the sea from their adversary.

It is interesting to note how light the material strength of ships, which the Carthaginians possessed, weighed in the balance against the moral strength

* "The Student's Rome," p. 204.

of the Romans consisting of national energy, the practice of studying war, and the consequent power of invention.*

The Romans, having defeated the Carthaginian fleet, were now able to attack Carthage, she herself holding, as she thought, immunity from attack. She was not slow to seize her advantage.

"Having reviewed the fleet at the Hermæan Promontory the consuls coasted along southward to the city of Aspis, or Clupea. Here they landed and took the place. The country now lay open before them. There was no Carthaginian army to meet them; no fortress capable of offering a long resistance. Carthage, being of old mistress of the sea, feared no invaders, and like England, trusted for defence mainly to her wooden walls. Yet she had not been unwarned. Some fifty years before the adventurous Agathocles had landed like Regulus. Then, as now, the whole country lay like a garden before him, covered with wealthy towns and the luxurious villas of the Carthaginian merchants. Then two hundred towns or more had surrendered almost without stroke of sword."

The result of Roman preparations led to the defeat of the Carthaginian fleets, to the consequent command of the sea by the Romans, and to the ability to utilise the weapon of offence, the Roman army.

Carthaginian territory was invaded, and the Carthaginian makeshift for an army having been defeated, Carthage itself was threatened.

* A similar lesson has been taught by Japan and China.

The Romans had indeed practically won the war. All that was required was to deliver the knockdown blow.

We read that "Manlius was recalled with the greater part of the army, and Regulus was left in Africa with only fifteen thousand foot and five hundred horse."

In other words, the Roman Senate, believing the war to be over, made the common error of not completing the work. Troops were withdrawn, whether for employment elsewhere, for the sake of economy, or to soothe popular clamour, is not apparent.

The result to be expected followed in due course.

The Romans with success in their grasp failed through over-confidence.

The Roman General demanded exorbitant terms. The Carthaginians, driven to desperation, called on a foreign soldier of renown, Xantippus, and practically made him dictator. He, collecting every available man, decisively defeated the Romans.

The volunteers of Carthage saved the country for the time being. But only for the time being. Breathing-space was given to Carthage, and had Hannibal then lived with supreme control, or had Xantippus been retained, it is more than probable that Carthage would have been victorious in the end. But before a soldier, however capable, could obtain supreme control, a civil war must practically take place.

When such a country as Carthage wages war, for

every battle her soldiers fight against her enemies, they must fight at least one battle against members of their own nation, generally their civilian leaders, who in their ignorance of war are sometimes of greater assistance to the enemy than that enemy's military forces.

We read that the Carthaginian Government, recognising the genius, or rather the knowledge of war, of Xantippus, practically made him dictator. A sublime height for such a government to rise to, and a height to which no popular government of the present day could rise. But having risen above all conventionality and precedent, this same government was unable to maintain itself in so rarified an atmosphere, and fell, if possible, lower than before.

It, flushed with success, practically drove out the one man who had shown himself capable of leading the nation to victory.

It preferred, in fact, the chance of future defeat to the prospect of immediate success, when that success might lead to its own downfall from power.

It was evidently fear of Xantippus which led the Government to dispense with his services; they shipped him hurriedly away to a distant country.

And while the Government of this now but partially aroused nation was driving away its saviour and studying only its own advantage, the military Roman nation was making every effort to repair its mistake and to gain ultimate victory. And though reverse followed reverse, yet the Roman nation,

this energetic nation which had trained itself to consider the use of arms, the most important of all national exercises, struggled on. Her whole fleet was destroyed in a gale; and she built a new one. The Carthaginians, we read, though on the whole successful in recovering lost ground, "weary of the war and suffering greatly in their commerce, thought that a fair opportunity for making peace was now offered." Carthage offered terms.

Rome refused, taking counsel from the great words uttered by Regulus:—

"Useless it was to ransom prisoners who had ignobly yielded with arms in their hands; let them be left to perish unheeded; let war go on till Carthage be subdued."

The commercial nation thinks only of its dwindling riches; the martial nation thinks only of success. The Roman fleet destroyed, Carthage was again granted the opportunity to strike at Rome; but she was weary. "He," Regulus, "has been censured for excessive presumptuousness in his African campaign, and for the extravagance by which he lost all the advantages which he might have secured. But it must be allowed that he had some grounds even for overweening self-confidence."

History is ever unjust to the general. Regulus must bear all the blame for defeat, though in truth he was not to blame. The Roman Senate, which withdrew troops from Regulus under the delusion that war was over, would seem to have been wholly

to blame. Regulus, having too few troops with which to conduct the war to a successful issue, could only hope to succeed by "bluff," and by trading on the fears of his adversary. His strongest, and, indeed, the only weapon left him, was confidence. That this weapon failed him was in no way his fault, but the fault of those who, having many weapons at command, left him this one alone with which to combat the national enemy.

By the mistake of withdrawing troops from Africa the Roman Senate deliberately in their ignorance allowed success to slip from their grasp. For fifty-five years did the war continue in consequence of this mistake; and during that time Rome was more than once in danger of destruction.

And the General—Regulus—not the Government, bears the blame, even as he, not the Government, expiated the offence with his blood. And so it must always be. The Spanish admiral is the man whose name will be associated with the downfall of Spain in the war with the United States. He at least did his duty to the best of his ability, and took his fleet to destruction against his own better judgment, on the order of his ignorant Government. That ignorant Government and the slothful race, which was responsible by want of preparation for their defeat, have earned the pity of the world, when they should have earned only contempt.

Regulus was, however, at the least, more fortunate than the unlucky native Carthaginian Generals, who

were in some cases crucified for failure. It would seem a speciality of undisciplined nations to crucify their unsuccessful or unpopular generals.

The whole war is a history of energy and determination on the part of the Romans, and of sloth on the part of the Carthaginians. On three separate occasions did the Romans lose their whole fleet; but the Carthaginians, though left with the command of the sea, failed to take advantage of their opportunity. More than this, we read that they "had of late neglected their navy." The scare had in fact passed, and with it all energy.

The fourth Roman fleet decisively defeated the Carthaginian; gaining, once for all, the command of the sea; and so ended the first Punic war.

While Rome appears to have continued her preparations for the next war, we read that "in the next three years Carthage was brought to the very brink of destruction by a general mutiny of her mercenary troops, which had been employed in Sicily and were now to be disbanded."

Hamilcar, the General, when granted a free hand, put down this mutiny without difficulty. He it was, who, being the one man to recognise that the destruction of either Rome or Carthage was inevitable, had determined to devote his life to the defeat of Rome; and as a first step saw clearly that it was necessary to "overthrow the power of the Council of One Hundred," the governing body of Carthage.

Recognising also that the offensive alone can win,

he commenced the colonisation of Spain with the evident object of establishing an alternative base of operations against Rome; and in this he was supported by his Government which, fearing for its own existence, thought it wise to employ him in Spain.

Hamilcar died before war broke out, and Hannibal, his son, took command of the army in Spain. He, there can be no doubt, was imbued with Hamilcar's principles; for on the outbreak of the second Punic war, he at once commenced the stupendous march through France and Northern Italy to strike at Rome itself, the heart of the enemy.

The Romans began the war with preparations for the invasion of Carthage, but Hannibal's sudden offensive move forced them to discard all such thoughts and to turn their whole attention to defence. They attempted to stem Hannibal's advance through Italy, and they attacked his base of operations in Spain by an oversea expedition. Carthage itself during three years remained in security; and, needless to say, her Council of One Hundred remained inactive. No efforts were made to build a fleet to wrestle for the command of the sea, and so to strike at Rome in conjunction with Hannibal. The whole army was in the field, no more mercenaries were forthcoming; in a word, her reserves were exhausted and the fat citizens were too slothful to fight for their country. Hannibal had Rome at his feet, except that "he wanted force enough to crush her," and sent for assistance to Carthage; the Council refused,

but frightened, apparently, by popular clamour, gave in. They, however, in place of attempting to send reinforcements oversea to Hannibal, sent them to Spain.

Fortune had given Carthage many chances, but the nation directed by a Council of War was capable only of "masterly inactivity." The chief fear of this Council would seem to have been lest it should be driven from power; national questions were but of trifling importance compared with this all-absorbing terror. Hasdrubal, Hannibal's brother, who was commanding in Spain, succeeded ultimately in defeating the Romans, and marched overland to to reinforce Hannibal. He was, however, defeated in Italy; and Hannibal, though he successfully eluded the Roman armies, was left practically helpless.

For sixteen years in all he threatened Rome, and thereby saved Carthage from the horrors of war. Now, however, the Romans took the offensive and struck at Carthage. Utilising their sea power, they landed in Africa and defeated the Carthaginian army. The Carthaginian Council of War hastened to sue for an armistice.

Rome, the capital of a warrior nation, a "nation in arms" threatened for sixteen years, held out: Carthage, the capital of a commercial nation, a nation whose manhood refused to fight for its country, gave in on the merest threat.

Hannibal, who with his army was still threatening Rome, was recalled. His genius and the

devotion and labour of his men were thrown away; he was recalled, immediately danger arose, to defend the Council of One Hundred.

Hannibal, brought back to Africa during the armistice was defeated, but succeeded in making peace. Rome, having the opportunity, again threw away the chance of killing her enemy.

Hannibal now set himself to reorganise the State, and succeeded. Even then Carthage might still have been successful in her struggle for existence; but her Government, jealous of Hannibal, entered into a league with Rome.

Hannibal was forced to flee the country. The Government, in fact, drove away the one man who could have saved the country.

Many years later, Rome, recognising that her existence was threatened as long as Carthage existed, forced on war. The Carthaginian Government, in its efforts to avoid this war, proclaimed Hasdrubal, its chief General, guilty of high treason, and sent apologies to Rome. It also gave three hundred of its noblest youths as hostages, only to be met with a demand for disarmament. With this demand it also complied; and, being now wholly disabled, was informed that the city, which was a menace to Rome, must be destroyed. Then at last the people of the city rose against the Government, chased the members of that Government through the streets, and appointed Hasdrubal dictator. And now was seen one of the most heroic defences in history.

The manhood of Carthage was roused, but too late; nothing could save the country; and the city was, after a long siege, taken and destroyed.

One tithe of the martial spirit displayed at the last moment, when too late, by the people of Carthage, would, at the commencement of the struggle, have sufficed to defeat Rome.

Great Britain trusts to her fleet almost, if not quite, as implicitly as did the Carthaginians. Like Carthage, she is unable to make use of her sea power in a war against an European enemy; for though her fleets give her the power of transporting an army with which to strike a decisive blow at her enemy, yet her army is altogether inadequate in numbers for the purpose.

She will, therefore, in an European war, find herself forced on the spur of the moment either to levy, train, and arm an army sufficient in numbers to cope with her adversary (as in South Africa), or she will be forced to stand on the defensive and await the time at which her enemy, having built or obtained ships, will be able to assume the offensive against her.

The similarity between Great Britain and Carthage does not cease with the material armaments; it exists also in what we may call the moral weakness for war. Great Britain, like Carthage, is a great commercial nation. She looks upon commerce and the accumulation of riches as the main object of a nation's existence. She has her rich merchants,

with their luxurious villas, doubtless loth to open their purses, much less to go through a course of training for such an improbable contingency as invasion. And yet these same merchants would consider a failure to insure their houses against fire as a gross lack of business instinct; and a failure to defend themselves against burglars as cowardice. Great Britain, like Carthage, having successfully defeated the savages against whom she constantly fights, considers herself an adept in war. Carthage was cruelly undeceived in the war with Rome. Great Britain has been, it is to be hoped, at least partially undeceived in her war in South Africa; that is, unless she is content to remain wilfully blind. In the latter case it is not difficult to foresee that she will, at some future period, be undeceived as cruelly as were the Carthaginians.

Can the similarity between Carthage and Great Britain not be traced further still?

The difference between an army of two hundred thousand men and five hundred thousand does not constitute the difference between defeat and victory.

It is national exertion alone—the habit of placing the study of war before all other pursuits in the national mind—that can bring victory to a nation; in other words, the martial spirit.

It is a truism that as a nation becomes civilised so does the martial spirit die out. Martial nations are those that have everything to gain by war and but little to lose. As a nation becomes civilised so

do her people become wealthy. The necessity for national exertion disappears, and with it disappears the aptitude. As the aptitude disappears, so does the longing for peace at any price make ground, until the party which prefers national dishonour to national effort of any kind becomes all-powerful. A nation in such a condition lives on the prestige of its former glories. As did the Carthaginians, so in after-years did the Romans; and so did the Spaniards; and so, for the last hundred years, have the British. When a nation arrives at such a pitch of lethargy, it is right and proper that younger or more vigorous nations should take over its inheritance; for otherwise the progress of the human race would cease.

It will require but little stretch of imagination on the part of the British soldier to draw a picture of the Carthaginian state of preparedness for war—its active army, consisting mostly of mercenaries drawn from foreign nations, principally employed in guarding the colonies—only a small portion of it retained at home to suppress risings of savage tribes, or to act as police—no reserve worthy of the name with which to reinforce the active army for the defence of a colony—a large number of ill-organised militia, and possibly volunteers and yeomanry, doubtless available only for home defence—that is, a nation incapable of taking the offensive, and therefore doomed to defeat. Yes, doomed to defeat! For as an army in the field which thinks only of defence is doomed to

defeat, so also is a nation which does not consider the possibility of driving an attack home on its adversary.

Nor is it hard to understand the difficulties that must have occurred in training the home army for war: civilian control of the army, with all its disadvantages; a tightening of the purse-strings, save only for the complicated machinery necessary for cutting down expenses; a refusal on the part of the great landowners to permit the army to manœuvre over their ground; and a stern determination on the part of the rulers of this country—the Parliament, in fact—to prevent all growth of an army sufficiently strong to get the upper hand. Rather, an inefficient army than too strong an army! Dislike of discipline on the part of the people, and therefore disinclination to serve as soldiers; freedom it is called! A periodical outcry, if outcry it can be termed, on the part of the soldiers, an outcry doubtless sternly repressed in those days, but which in these days would be lightly put aside by a masterpiece of untruthful oratory. Possibly some slight concession to those who would see their country great in war as in peace. An increase, on paper, in the number of troops; but no actual increase. And as time rolls on, and the nation suffers inevitable defeat, the people and their rulers blame their soldiers and their sailors—blame the men who at least have shed their blood in defence of their country. And history, also, but seldom has a word

of blame for the ignorance, or worse, of the rulers and the pusillanimity of the people.

To act purely on the defensive spells certain destruction in the end. The offensive is the only safe defence. The command of the sea can only pave the way; it cannot strike the decisive blow. The decisive blow can only be struck by an army in the heart of the enemy's country.

In the wars against Louis XIV. of France the decisive blow was struck by the British and German armies in France. The British fleet merely enabled British troops in very small numbers to be transported to Europe in order to assist.

In the wars against Napoleon the allied armies struck the decisive blow. The navy again merely opened the way for the small numbers of British troops.

Had either Louis XIV. or Napoleon had free hands with which to fight Great Britain the result can hardly be questioned; for Great Britain would have been in the condition of a pugilist who endeavours to ward off the blows of his adversary without returning them.

It was certainly Great Britain's money in the latter case which enabled her to buy allies. Will nations in the present day allow themselves to be bought over to "pull the chestnuts from the fire" for Great Britain?

In the eighteenth century the French and Spanish fleets gained command of the sea, and Great Britain

lay at their mercy. They, however, neglected their opportunity, and turned their attention to Gibraltar.

Napoleon's combination for the invasion of England, which was foiled at Trafalgar, almost succeeded; and that when, after years of warfare, Great Britain was thoroughly awakened. Were such a combination to be directed against Great Britain at the commencement of a war, while she was yet but stretching herself after her years of slothful peace, it would, in all probability, succeed; for a nation no more than a man can, unless it be trained to a life of wakefulness, spring suddenly from sleep into activity.

European nations will not, in these days of strategical study, commit the gross strategical fault of the French and Spanish in failing to invade Great Britain.

The British fleet is popularly termed the first line of defence; the regular British army the second line; the militia the third line; the volunteers the fourth line. This is incorrect. We might with equal truth call the unemployed the fifth line, the Press the sixth line, and the House of Commons, to prepare the white flags and the articles of submission, the seventh line.

There is but one, and only one, line of defence: a navy sufficiently powerful to gain and keep the command of the sea, combined with an army consisting of the manhood of the nation, with which to strike at the enemy in his own territory. But it

is the martial spirit of the nation which alone will win success; and such a spirit can only be roused when every man considers it his first duty to fight for his country. And even this martial spirit must be well directed and organised, or it must fail.

Lack of the martial spirit, faulty organisation, bad national discipline, and, above all, bad leadership in peace strategy, in preparation for war, and in the actual conduct of operations, will, notwithstanding superiority in resources and material, lead with absolute certainty to defeat.

"We must in any case allow that a great military genius will contrive to gain victories even with the most imperfect tools, and that *it*, therefore, is the best guarantee of victory, for 'in war men are nothing; *one* man is everything.' Yet such genius is rare, and, moreover, gets blunted by old age or is lost by death. Hence sound military institutions are better guarantees of lasting success. Where these exist, there the troops will always be officered, if not by exceptional men, still by capable, resolute, energetic leaders; and in the above examples we have just seen that this is, if not the whole, yet the most important primary condition of victory. Moreover, sound military institutions will bring forth such leaders, and will not fail as long as the whole nation is sound, and military service is an honour and not a burden. Where this is no longer the case, the nation will fall and give place to a stronger and therefore better one, for in the relations between

states might makes right, and 'military authors teach the use of might for the maintenance of right.'" *

With nations such as the Carthaginians military institutions cannot be sound; and the success or failure of the nation must depend on the rise at the critical moment of a genius. Even with such an unlooked-for stroke of luck, the genius, as was the case with Hannibal, can only save his nation provided he, in the first instance, successfully wrest the power from the hands of incapable leaders. But in modern times, when nations are armed to the teeth, when the whole national body is, so to speak, trained to spring at the moment, every sense on the alert, every hard-trained muscle tense, time will lack in which to effect revolutions. With bad leadership, defeat will come first, revolution later.

* "Napoleon as a General," vol. i., pp. 240-241.

CHAPTER XI

THE MILITARY INSTITUTIONS

The British Army Machine—The British Navy Machine.

THE British army has, for some centuries past, been gradually built up with the object, not of rendering it a thoroughly efficient machine, capable of safeguarding the interests of the Empire, but of making it appear on the surface to be such.

The result is an extraordinarily complicated concern that has for years past been fated to break down whenever fate might put it to the test.* This fact has long been recognised by soldiers.

It was to some extent put to the test in the Crimean war of 1854, when Great Britain found herself not only at war with a Continental Power, but forced to invade her adversary's territory as the only means of bringing her to submission.

Great Britain entered upon the war in the state of blissful ignorance in which she invariably enters upon all her wars, whether great or small, save

* The Report of the War Commission conclusively proves this statement.

only in the case of Tel-el-Kebir, the Atbara, and Omdurman.

Such ignorance is the direct result of the fact that her armaments are controlled, and her policy and even strategy directed, not by soldiers or sailors, but by civilians who have shown themselves to be ignorant of the most commonplace necessities of war, and even of the simplest rudiments of strategy.

The military machine, as might have been expected, broke down; the war was, however, carried to a successful termination by the gallantry and determination of soldiers and sailors whose blood paid for the faults and ignorance of their civilian rulers.

The efforts, if they can be called efforts, of the civilian rulers to organise the army after the war were, as they always have been and probably always will be, absurd.

There was no attempt to arrive at a definite conclusion as to the strength of the army which would be required to safeguard the interests of the Empire; there was no honest attempt to make the army efficient; there were efforts only to throw dust in the eyes of the clamouring populace and Opposition with a view to making the army appear efficient at the smallest possible expense.

Many years after, when the Franco-German war had given a startling object-lesson to the world, the Secretary of State for War, the virtual commander-in-chief of the army, actuated apparently by the sincere desire to do his utmost to make the army efficient,

and, probably, well knowing that some form of universal service was necessary, but yet fearing to suggest to his Government that they should risk their existence in attempting to bring forward so hopeless a scheme, did much in introducing the short service system, whereby the army was at least provided with an apology for a paper reserve, and, to some small extent, with a power of expansion.

But for this short service system, with its power of expansion, introduced probably under pressure from Lord Wolseley, the British Empire would assuredly have been disintegrated and destroyed in the next great crisis, that crisis which was even then impending—the Boer war.

But this short service system, great advance though it was, was merely a step—a very short step—in the right direction.

It legislated for a paid but entirely inadequate reserve, if it can be termed reserve, to the active army; it made no effort to impress upon Englishmen that every able-bodied man should be proud and able to fight for his country, and that universal service alone could supply the necessary number of men without unduly depleting the resources of the country. The radical defects of the army machine were entirely disregarded, and polish and paint were freely lavished on the surface.

Since that day no Government has been found sufficiently patriotic or educated, even to consider seriously the necessity for universal service, much

less to force it forward into the field of practical politics.

Let us examine in detail the points which have been enumerated as being the difficulties with which Great Britain is face to face in organising her army. These difficulties have often been quoted.

1. Great Britain must maintain a garrison in India, and in other possessions beyond the seas.

2. She must be prepared to undertake a small war in other quarters of the globe without unduly depleting these garrisons.

3. She must be prepared with land forces for the defence of Great Britain in case of invasion.*

The idea of an invasion of Great Britain has, in view of the strength of the navy and the existence of the sea, been regarded, except, indeed, by certain soldiers and sailors, as so remote a contingency as to be practically unworthy of consideration. In deference, however, to popular clamour in times of scare, the point had, even before the Boer war, received a certain perfunctory consideration.

A possible but improbable invasion by a maximum force of a hundred thousand to a hundred and fifty thousand men was taken into consideration.

It was considered that a partially trained, ill-disciplined, and entirely unorganised force, composed principally of volunteers, yeomanry, and militia,

* The question of a decisive blow to be struck at the enemy in his territory has never been considered. Great Britain devoutly hopes that other nations will do this for her.

stiffened by the available regular army in Great Britain, would be ample.

So remote, however, was the possibility of invasion considered, that it appears to have been thought unnecessary by the civilian authorities to place any artillery with this force for home defence, except that, all too inadequate, in the regular army.

It may practically be said that the question of resisting invasion received no real thought; and that the volunteers and yeomanry were encouraged, not from any prospect of their utility, but because their suppression would have caused a popular outcry, and because, if their existence pleased the nation, there was no particular reason why they should not exist, even if there was no particular reason why they should exist. The first and second points were, in fact, the two points on which the British army was organised. How should the necessary garrisons abroad be maintained; and how should a small expedition be carried out without depleting these garrisons?

During the last century the requirements of the nation in soldiers have increased enormously; while the value of labour has risen, and thus fewer men can be obtained for the same money, unless, indeed, a worse class of man be employed.

This problem could be solved in three ways:—

1. To adopt a cheaper system of obtaining recruits.
2. To increase the expenditure on the army.
3. To close the eyes to facts, and to refuse to recognise the increased necessities of the nation.

The first course involved some form of compulsion, which neither the nation nor its political leaders would for a single moment consider. The second course, an increase in expenditure, the Government could only be brought to consider with difficulty, for increased army estimates involve danger to the party in power. The third course, while it might involve the nation in disaster, would in no way endanger the existence of the party in power. It was, therefore, a combination of the second and third courses, the third course preponderating, which has been adopted by successive British Governments throughout the last century. The numbers of the British army thus, by degrees, dropped far below the requirements of the nation.* Thus the efforts of the civilian army administrators were directed to obtaining the largest number of recruits without any increase in expenditure. Facts were disregarded; that which the Government and people wished to believe was believed; the requirements of the nation were hardly considered; and the requirements of the party in power for the time being in its political defence against the Opposition formed the primary consideration. It was of no importance that the numbers were most obviously, to

* Up to the time of the Franco-German war this fact constituted a growing danger to the country; but after the sudden appearance of nations in arms, not only on the continent of Europe, but in other parts of the world, such, for instance, as the Boer nation in South Africa, this growing danger rapidly developed into a menace to the very existence of the nation, as exemplified by the Boer war of 1899.

every man who had given even a little thought to the subject, totally inadequate to the growing needs of the nation, and that the requisite numbers could only be obtained under some form of compulsory service; for so long as the British people were content there was no object in rousing discontent. It would, of course, have been quite childish for the civilian Commander-in-Chief to endanger the existence of his party by pressing the requirements of the nation on the notice of the public; such a thing had never been done; there was no precedent for such a course in the annals of party politics.

The responsible soldier of the time, the nominal Commander-in-Chief, endeavoured from time to time to educate the people to the true situation, with the only result that he increased his unpopularity; he doubtless also pressed his views, but as is evident without avail, on the real Commander-in-Chief, his civilian master, the politician. The army in reality existed, not so much for the work it might have to do, as to allay popular excitement in times of scare, and apparently to afford a subject of interesting discussion, from time to time, to the numerous untrained legislators of the country.

Efficiency was similarly a matter of no importance, provided the lack of efficiency were not apparent to the British public; war, to the civilian leaders of the nation who had given no thought to the subject, was far off, while the all-absorbing political squabbles were ever present. Get recruits somehow; if neces-

sary, under false pretences; only get them. If the system were to break down now through lack of men it would sadly hamper the Government!—such would seem to be the idea uppermost in the mind of a party government.

Men were consequently inveigled into joining in the belief that they would receive pay of one clear shilling a day, together with free clothing and rations; this they discovered after enlistment to be false. It is the case that the soldier received a daily ration of a sufficiency of certain articles of good food, but the clothing supplied was entirely inadequate. A soldier must, on field days and manœuvres, kneel or lie down in wet grass, mud, or water; he must march in pelting rain hung round with numerous articles of equipment, each one of which quickly stains scarlet cloth or serge. It was thus the case that one wet day might ruin his clothing, and this ruin had to be made good from his own pocket, for the soldier must also turn out spick and span on parade.*

This clothing question had far-reaching results, for many an officer refused to subject his men to inclement weather or to make them lie down when supposed to be under fire. Faulty training was the general result, which cost the lives of many a soldier in the Boer war. Those officers, with whom zeal outran discretion, who made their training realistic, and who dirtied their men's clothes, were regarded

* This has now been changed, for the soldier gets a working dress.

as faddists. But it was not only in the matter of clothes that the soldier was ill-treated; he was forced to subscribe to numerous trifles, such as library, shooting club, haircutting, extra messing, and others, and when all was paid, he was fortunate if he received two-thirds of his shilling a day. Hence it was that many a soldier, with, it must be admitted, some show of reason, considered that he had been deliberately trapped; and, discontented and surly, developed into a "bad character"; and after the completion of his colour service, returned to his village a confirmed "ne'er-do-well"—a warning to all others in the countryside.

The main efforts of the civilian army administrators were also, needless to say, directed to cutting down the expenditure in every conceivable way. Certain sanitary labours are, it is unnecessary to state, essential within the precincts of barracks; certain works, such as the erection of butts on rifle ranges, the improvement of fortifications, the loading and unloading of stores required for troops, or even for naval purposes, were necessary. All these were performed by the troops, whose services could be obtained for nothing, save only at the cost of their military training. It thus came to be the case that, except at certain very short periods of the year, neither the company officer nor the battalion commander could get possession of his men for the purposes of training. It was a matter of almost daily occurrence for a battalion eight hundred strong, to turn out under three hundred

men for parade; and a battalion commander was fortunate if he could succeed in getting his full battalion together for one parade in the whole week. The soldier was not, in fact, a soldier in the proper sense of the term. He was taught no trade except idleness, and after his colour service he in many cases went to swell the ranks of the unemployed and to act as a deterrent to recruiting. By degrees service in the army became exceedingly unpopular throughout the country; the soldier gained a bad name as the "dregs of the nation"; recruits of good class were increasingly difficult to obtain; youths of eighteen years (the age limit) were not forthcoming, and the civilian authorities, wilfully blinding their eyes to acts, accepted as recruits every boy of fifteen and sixteen years who, stating he was eighteen, offered himself as a soldier.

The army was, indeed, a fraud. It was a paper army, not intended for the hard work of war, but for the comparatively simple task of befooling the British public. There were many other crying evils, matters of notoriety throughout the army, points which afforded subject for constant discussion to intelligent and thinking soldiers. Was it the lax discipline? Men may not be punished lest it might ruin recruiting. Was it the inability of the men to do a hard day's work? The endurance of the men might not be tested lest it might check recruiting. Was it indifferent shooting? Men cannot be trained without ammunition, and ammunition costs money; the officer

must pay for such ammunition out of his own pocket or go without; and then there was no range available. All these evils were matters of notoriety throughout the army, and it is but fair to infer that they were equally well known to the chiefs, both civil and military, of the army; it was absurd to suppose that these military chiefs, eminent soldiers, would not have remedied these evils had they possessed the power, but it is a notorious fact that they did not possess the power.

The army was a fraud.

There were, however, saving clauses. The soldier was, after all, an Englishman, brave, dogged, and amenable to discipline; and the British officer, keen, energetic, determined, made the utmost of the material at command and of the opportunities afforded him, notwithstanding the fact that his power of initiative had from the commencement of his service been suppressed by the red tape of a bad system, and his intelligence confined by a hopeless lack of education. These were the two chief offences with which he was charged by his numerous critics in the Boer war; and the cause of each one can be directly traced to the control of the army by the party politician. The young officer, animated by a devoted patriotism and zeal for his profession, commenced his service in the determination to learn his work; but in the course of the first few years, finding that any display of initiative or zeal was regarded in the light of a nuisance, and rather as a military offence than

as a military quality, quickly came to consider the beaten track of indolence as the safest and surest path to success. Why work? There was no need, provided that the company accounts—the hopeless complication of which again is due to the voluntary system and to the party politician—were properly kept, that the men's buttons were bright, and that he wore his best boots on church parade. Why work at tactics or the higher branches of his art? Could he not rise in rank in the ordinary course by seniority without such knowledge? And would such knowledge help him if luck in promotion went against him? Why work? Why, indeed!

It will be found by all who care to think out the subject, that every failing on the part of the British soldier, whether as general, staff officer, regimental officer, or man, that has been imputed to him, whether it be lack of initiation, lack of thought and study, lack of individuality, all are directly traceable to a bad system, which was too expensive to permit of the expenditure of money on education and training, and to the fact that the army is ruled by the party politician, to whom the efficiency of the army is an entirely secondary consideration compared to the interests of his party, that is, to his own interests. The marvel is, not that British troops have displayed faults, or that they have, for the first time in history, sustained a succession of repulses, but that they ever succeed in defeating the enemies of their country, or take the smalless interest in their profession. There is, however, one quality

that the British soldier possesses in an eminent degree, and which the curse of party politics has not as yet been able to eradicate—it is the quality of bravery.

The regular army being held in disrepute amongst the great mass of the middle classes, the martial spirit of the British people was forced to seek an outlet elsewhere. The irregular forces—the militia, volunteers, and yeomanry—afforded the necessary opportunity. The above-named "martial spirit" did not demand much: it by no means asked for the risks of war, for stern discipline, organisation, and efficiency; but it did cry out for pretty clothes and for the opportunity to let off a gun from time to time at an imaginary enemy. It was carefully fostered and directed into the wrong channel by the civilian rulers of the nation, who pointed out that it obviated the necessity of universal service, which they termed "conscription" and "slavery." As in the case of the regular army, no attempt to introduce organisation, discipline, or efficiency into the irregular forces was made by the rulers of the country; these irregular forces served their turn; they rendered it impossible that the military could ever gain ascendency over the civil, and, consequently, that the leadership of the country could ever be in the hands of any but the professional politician. They gave amusement to the populace; and—well—war was far off; and, no matter what some of those soldier faddists and cranks might say, there was no danger of invasion provided

the navy was strong; while as for the necessity of the employment of a large army abroad—well—such necessity might be considered when it arose; and, in any case, there was no time for this now—there was the motor-car question to be considered.

Difficulties will always arise in the path of any system that is established on a false basis, and these difficulties increase and multiply until even the system itself is lost sight of, amid the numerous makeshifts which have been built up around it.

It may be taken for granted that so long as the present voluntary system, or any mere modification of it, exists, and that so long as the armed forces of the nation are controlled by politicians, so long will the British army, and probably the British navy, be ill-organised, inefficient, and ill-directed.

* * * * * *

In Great Britain the expression "conscription" has been exploited by those desirous of exemption, at all costs, from the obvious first duty of every man, which is to fight for his country.

"Conscription" was employed by Napoleon, an autocrat, at the time when, France being in great difficulties for want of troops and his position being consequently insecure, soldiers were a necessity, and men must be forced, even though unwilling, to become soldiers.

"Universal service," on the other hand, arose in Prussia, which nation having passed through times of bitter adversity in the Napoleonic wars, recognised

that every man should be proud to fight and, if necessary, die in defence of his fatherland.

There is a difference.

In the one case, the man is forced by an autocrat to be a soldier against his will; in the other, men actuated by a sense of patriotism become soldiers by preference, aware that unless every man is prepared to do his duty he and his country must fall.

There is now no such thing as conscription, and the nearest approach to it would appear to be the Militia Ballot Act in Great Britain, a relic of ancient days.

Universal service is the noblest example of national patriotism that has been displayed in the history of the world. It is a return to first principles—to barbarism, if you will—that nations, as men, must fight for existence. Savage tribes, liable to be attacked at any moment by a neighbouring tribe, appreciate the meaning of the word "existence." So also now do all the nations of Europe. So also, it would seem, must the British Empire, or cease to exist.

In Germany, France, and Austria those men who have not performed their army or navy service, are, it is said, regarded with compassion by all, women included, as unfortunate men, unable, whether through mental or physical defects, to do their duty.

In England the soldier is considered a fool; and the sailor is termed a "handy man," a term of endearment employed apparently because he took some guns to Ladysmith. The soldier and sailor are, in

fact, together with the policeman, in Great Britain, looked upon as fit subjects on which to exercise buffoonery when all goes well, and to be converted into scapegoats when all goes badly; and it may yet be that soldier, sailor, and policeman will be the last to make a stand against an invading enemy.

Universal service is another name for a nation in arms; it means that every able-bodied man—and this cannot be too often reiterated—is taught and is ready to take his place in the ranks either as soldier or sailor in defence of his country—that is, in either the offensive or the defensive. It means constant preparation, with a definite plan for war with any possible foe. It means that in all matters connected with war there is but one directing and all-powerful brain. That the scheme of mobilisation is worked out to the minutest detail, and is known to all concerned. That each man has his work, and that each man understands how to carry it out.

It means that the secret plan of operations by which such a nation (as for instance, Germany) intends to defeat her principal enemy in the struggle for existence is known only to the leaders of the nation, and is a secret which will not be divulged until success is attained or is fairly within the grasp. The whole works smoothly. Peace strategy weakening the adversary, preparation making ready the instrument, whether it be army or navy, with special reference to the proposed enemy, the order

to mobilise, and the whole great machine of the German nation, crushing all opposition, commences the work by which its enemy shall be rendered helpless.*

With universal service the greatest brains of a nation are employed in the constant study of war; without universal service the ablest brains of the nation are fully employed in the trickery of politics or in commerce, and have no time to give to thoughts of war.

To replace the organisation of a great nation in arms with an extraordinary jumble of volunteers, militia, and yeomen, no man of whom knows his place or what duty he may be liable to be asked, not ordered, to carry out, whether to stand with a rifle on his own doorstep, or to be asked to volunteer for service in a foreign country, or whether

* German troops in China and their organisation have been criticised by Englishmen; and attention has been drawn to the fact that they were not comparable to British troops or to the well-equipped British expedition. The fact has been entirely disregarded that Germany can put some five million such troops in the field, whereas Great Britain can now place a hundred and twenty thousand in the field for service abroad. (The Secretary of State for War stated in November, 1902, that Great Britain can now put a hundred and twenty thousand in the field abroad.) The fact has also been disregarded that it was Germany's first essay at an over-sea expedition, whereas Great Britain has been employed in such expeditions for three hundred years. The fact is also disregarded that Germany will learn from such an experience, and will do better in the future, especially in the case of a short sea voyage, while Great Britain does not learn from experience, neither from her own nor from that of other nations.

on a horse, a ship, a train, or on foot, is to replace an organised force with a mob.*

The result of an engagement between two such nations can never for a moment be in doubt.

The Boer war was a first real trial of the strength or weakness of the British nation; it was a far more forcible test than any that had yet been put upon the army machine.

The Boers, a petty nation in arms, fairly well organised, but ill-equipped, ill-prepared, ill-led, and entirely wanting in that first great essential for victory, discipline, were yet able to throw out of gear the British army machine, and to render necessary superhuman efforts and the most extraordinary shifts before that machine could be made capable of performing its task.

* * * * * *

It is a fact that in the event of invasion, such invasion will be carried out by a great modern military nation, of which the trained soldiers are numbered by millions; and that such a nation would invade Great Britain with every available man which could by any possibility be ferried across the sea; in order to, once and for all, strike a great and decisive blow which should render Great Britain helpless for ever.

* Since the Boer war the organisation of the army has been extended to embrace the militia, volunteers, and yeomanry; but such organisation, though doubtless an improvement on the old order of things, is practically worthless without an adequate and highly trained staff and trained regimental officers.

The object would be to overwhelm Great Britain with the number of armed men in the shortest possible space of time, in order to prevent all attempts at the organisation of new levies. Given even temporary command of the sea, there is no reason why men to the number of a million should not be brought across from either France or Germany.

"The idea which underlay this landing" (Napoleon's invasion of Great Britain) "was perfectly correct, it was a 'putting into practice of the highest rule of war—namely, try to put your strong points as to time and space against the enemy's weak points.' Napoleon's strength lay in his army and in war on land; England's strength consisted in its fleet and in war at sea; to attack her in such a way that his strength might be brought to bear was, therefore, assuredly good strategy." *

Any army invading Great Britain will probably number, from first to last, over a million men, and may quite possibly be double that number. The lack of transport has been given as a reason why no army of more than a hundred thousand to a hundred and fifty thousand men could be landed. Such reasons have never yet in the history of the world prevented a determined nation from carrying out its object. Barges and rafts would be sufficient for a short sea voyage, and what matters the loss of a

* "Napoleon as a General," vol. i., p. 199, by Count Yorcke von Wartenburg, Colonel of the General Staff of the Prussian Army.

few thousand men provided the object be attained? Napoleon, even in the days before steam, was prepared to invade England with a hundred and fifty thousand men.

The question of food supplies would furnish little, if any, difficulty; for in such an invasion an invading army would temporarily live on the country, and the fact that the inhabitants would starve would be entirely immaterial to the invaders. Sentiment or kindly feeling is out of place in war.

Great Britain, alone of all nations, is governed by sentiment in war; a sentiment which the troops of her own vigorous colonies failed entirely to understand in the Boer war.

An entirely false inference has been drawn, principally by civilians, from the Boer war. It has been impressed on the people of Great Britain that any nation, the men of which are able to shoot, is able to defend itself with certain success against an invading army. Arguing from this false standpoint, the British nation is being taught that its principal duty in the matter of self-defence is to teach every man to use a rifle. Organisation, training, discipline, efficient leading, and the art of marching and acting in large masses, together with the fact that the Boers, notwithstanding their good marksmanship, were beaten, have been wholly disregarded.

The Boers owed their initial successes to their simple but efficient organisation, to their extreme mobility, which enabled them to strike rapidly and

to escape punishment after defeat, but above all to their superiority in numbers, to their comparative preparation for war, and to the entire lack of all scientific preparation on the part of Great Britain. They owed their ultimate defeat to faulty strategy, that is, bad generalship, and to their lack of discipline and military training. Through lack of knowledge of the military art their generals were unable to grasp the necessity of, or to direct, a bold concentrated offensive, even as their men, through lack of discipline and training, were unable to press home a determined attack which should carry all before it. In organised warfare the Boers were a failure, and as such were doomed to ultimate defeat. Their armies defeated and disorganised, however, they adopted guerilla warfare as to the manner born. They were indeed born to it; each man could ride, could shoot, could, above all, run away; each man had his two to three horses, and was far better mounted than his opponents. But guerilla tactics do not win wars.* From the day that the Boer armies were defeated and disorganised, the only hope of success lay in one of three things:—

1. Outside assistance.
2. An organised rebellion in Cape Colony.
3. A change of Government in Great Britain.

It was with these hopes that the Boers continued

* Napier has clearly shown us that the Spanish guerillas could not for long have held out against Napoleon but for the organised assistance afforded by Great Britain.

the struggle. Their leaders—Botha, Delarey, and De Wet—trained in the stern school of actual war, had learned that without organisation and discipline the offensive was impossible, and that by offence alone could success be won. Their utmost efforts were therefore directed to the organisation and discipline of their men.

Civilian teachers of the British public would, however, have the nation adopt guerilla tactics from the outset of a possible war; they would discard all organised resistance to invasion, and would doom their countrymen to ultimate defeat. Ultimate defeat! They would doom them to immediate, and certain, and decisive defeat.

Were the British nation composed of poachers, then indeed might the inhabitants of the British Islands hold out against an invading army until such time as some other nation came to their assistance. Are the British people content to be beholden to the generosity of other nations for their existence?

The British labouring man, armed with a rifle and taught to use it on the rifle range, would be, unlike the Boer, the most helpless of creatures in the face of an organised and trained enemy. Where are his horses? Where is his superior mobility? The continental infantry soldier would outmarch the British labourer or mechanic by one mile in the hour. Were every man trained to the use of a bicycle there might be something in it. But where is his knowledge and training for a jungle life?

Where is the South African climate? Even the meanest Englishman lives in a house; the townsman thrown suddenly, even in the midst of summer, on the country, to gain his living as best he might would die; the countryman forced to live day and night in the hedgerows, in the coppices, or it may be in the river beds, as did the Boers, would die. But few would live to tell the tale. The British soldier, even, is not trained to bivouac under the English winter sky, lest the mortality should ruin recruiting. The continental soldier, on the other hand, is trained to face the elements.

If the British people intends to depend on guerilla warfare for its defence against invasion, it would do well to secretly bury stores of arms, ammunition, and bicycles in all the kloofs and kopjies of England, aye, even in Piccadilly itself; two or three rifles with ammunition in every house, whether in roof, cellar, or in garden; it would do well to put every foreigner out of the country, lest, in time of invasion, he disclose the position of these secret deposits to the enemy.

The idea of a guerilla defence of Great Britain is an absurdity.

The defence of Great Britain against invasion by masses of partially-trained volunteers and militia without a thoroughly organised and trained staff and without well-trained officers is merely guerilla warfare on a large scale. British volunteers in South Africa were picked men; and even they were not trusted alone. The company of volunteers was

placed amongst seven companies of regulars; the battalion of volunteers was sandwiched between battalions of regulars. Let British soldiers, Boers, or even the volunteers themselves, answer the following question:—"What would assuredly have occurred, had a volunteer brigade of infantry, with a fair proportion of yeomanry as its mounted troops, and guns manned by volunteers, all under their own volunteer officers, been sent alone and undefended for a trip into the veldt?" Colonel Henderson, in his "Stonewall Jackson," compares the value of the American volunteer with that of the German conscript in the war of 1870-71.*

He calls attention to the fact that "a singular apathy took possession" of the German troops in 1870, when, after a career of "unchequered victory," they, arriving in front of Paris, found the place strongly garrisoned; and it became clear to them that the victory was yet far from won. He contrasts this state of morale with that of the troops of the confederation who, even after two years of war, showed no signs of discouragement. It is undoubtedly the case that he who, after a severe struggle, seeing victory within his grasp, finds that he has underestimated the capacity for further exertion of his adversary, and that his efforts must be renewed for an indefinite period, becomes discouraged. Such is a trait of human nature; and victory in war, as in a game, may often be snatched

* "Stonewall Jackson," vol. ii., p. 355.

by a losing side from an enemy who thus suddenly loses confidence. It is the case that adversity, if met with a stern front, brings forth the finer qualities of human nature; while success, more often than not, exposes the worse features. A nation struggling for existence in its own country, as were the troops of the Confederation, watching its homes destroyed, and its kinsfolk exposed to all the horrors of war, must, if it be any way worthy of the name of nation, if only from a spirit of revenge, but increase its efforts to expel the invader and to carry the war into his territory. Colonel Henderson is of opinion "that the old adage which declares that 'one volunteer is better than three pressed men' is not yet out of date."

The adage might, however, it would seem, be somewhat modified. One trained volunteer, efficiently led, must always be better than three pressed men, also efficiently led. It is, however, probable that one untrained volunteer, led by untrained officers, is by no means the equal of the pressed man properly led. The leading of to-day is by no means so simple as was the leading of a hundred or even of fifty years ago. The British volunteer officer, in the event of invasion, will not be granted two years in which to train himself; the war will probably be over, one way or the other, within a few months.

The great moral qualities of determination, patriotism, and enthusiasm, if joined to the physical qualities of discipline and organisation, will triumph in the future as they have in the past over mere stolid

discipline and organisation alone; but moral qualities unaided must fail in these days of scientific war. These moral qualities are to discipline and organisation as the fire of genius in the great painter is to his knowledge of technique. Perfection is only achieved by a combination of the two.

It should be noted, moreover, that troops, enlisted under universal service, do not, like their prototype of the past, the conscript, lack moral qualities; whereas it undoubtedly is that volunteers, until "licked into shape," lack the physical qualities of discipline, training, and organisation.

In the event of invasion, time in which to lick volunteers into shape will be lacking.*

To stem a possible invasion—an invasion which daily becomes more probable—every man in Great Britain should be trained and ready to take his place in the ranks. But this is not sufficient. If the British Empire is determined to defeat its probable adversaries, every man throughout the Empire, even the Boers in South Africa, must be prepared to form a member of the great army, which, utilising the power given by the command

* The author does not wish to belittle the volunteers and yeomanry; but he does wish to point out clearly and unmistakably that ill-led enthusiasm cannot compensate for the absence of training. With highly trained officers and a highly trained staff, it is probable that the volunteers and yeomanry would, in the course of a month of the stern discipline of war, develop into the finest troops in the world. Without such officers and staff they will be, notwithstanding the magnificent material of which they are composed, helpless against the troops of a "nation in arms."

of the sea, shall concentrate for the invasion of its enemy's territory.

* * * * * *

With the adoption of universal service, all the so-called difficulties in the way of obtaining an efficient and well-organised army would be swept away. The question of a garrison for India and for other tropical possessions would no longer be questions the solution of which would afford any difficulty.

A large, efficient, and cheap army would be the first result of universal service. To an army of such a size the upkeep of a garrison of a hundred thousand men in India would be but a trifle. If India were attacked, the whole manhood of the nation would be available with which to repel the attack, or rather to attack and destroy the rash adversary which had ventured to assail the British Empire.

Unless, however, the necessities of Great Britain and the Empire be clearly recognised, and universal service in some form be adopted, the question of the garrisons of India and other possessions across the seas, and the organisation of even a trifling field force, will remain an insuperable difficulty, and the British army will remain a heterogeneous and ill-organised machine on paper and a negligible quantity in reality.

It has been said that "conscription or militarism" * is not in accordance with the genius of the Englishman. Such statements are insults to the Briton, for

* These are merely the terms commonly employed in order to discredit the noble and patriotic idea of universal service.

they really mean that he is too slothful to fight in his own defence. This is not the case. The genius of the Briton, whether of the individual or of the nation, lies in war. The individual Briton is proverbial throughout the world as a man who delights in physical exercise, even to excess. And so similarly would the Briton as a nation. He has not yet, however, grasped the fact that war and the training for war is the true national exercise, and that commerce, which follows in the train of success in war, should be but a secondary enterprise.

"But, above all, for Empire and greatness, it importeth most that a nation do profess arms as their principal honour, study, and occupation."

Thus wrote Bacon in the sixteenth century.

It is unfortunately the case that no British statesman or politician has made an effort to teach the people the necessity for an universal training to arms; and yet the necessity has long been clearly apparent.

It would, indeed, seem to be the political leaders of the nation themselves who are most averse to the principle of universal service; lest, possibly, its introduction, resulting from the common sense of the nation having been aroused, would remove power from their own incapable hands, and place it in the hands of those men alone who had made a close study of war. And it is true that the education of the nation at large, which would be the first result of universal service, would quickly lead it to form a just appreciation of the ignorance of the politician

class by whom it has so long been ruled, and to curtail their power.

A nation of soldiers will not for long brook the leadership of civilians in war.*

The civilian has, throughout the past century, displayed a marked incapacity both in the organisation and administration of the army machine; and it would seem desirable for the British people to remove the control of this machine, on which the security and even the existence of the nation may depend, from the hands of the civilian, and give the soldier an opportunity to display his ability unfettered by civilian interference.

The British Navy Machine.

Before the Boer war signs were not wanting, for all men of observation, not necessarily soldiers, who were able to read and understand, that the British army was far from perfection, and that it would

* The members of the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa would appear to have been a fair selection from the ruling classes of the country. The Report of the Commission, as well as every line of evidence given before it, prove conclusively the necessity for universal service; and yet the members of the Commission, entirely disregarding this fact, make a suggestion of which the immediate result would only be further to complicate the already hopelessly involved military systems of the country. They would furnish an unorganised force, not of men, but of babes. How should boys at school be taught the practice of wielding fifteen-pounder and five-inch guns? The gunner's art requires physical strength; and artillery can by no means be disregarded in modern armies. War demands men, not children and old women.

almost certainly break down under any real test. Now, it was the so-called Commander-in-Chief, the great soldier, in strict subordination to the real Commander-in-Chief, the civilian member of the Cabinet, who, venturing in the interests of his country to risk his own position and to utter suggestions in public that the army might be improved, and that it was wrong to rest all hopes of success in war on the navy, for ships did sometimes sink, was greeted by a storm of opprobrium and abuse from the Press.

Again, it was an irresponsible civilian who, taking, extraordinary as it may appear, some real interest in the armed forces of his country, called attention to the inefficiencies of the army. Or, it may be, a soldier here, and a soldier there, ventured to write to the papers on the subject. All these signs were disregarded until the test of war made clear to all the utter inadequacy of the army to carry out its duties.

Similar signs have not been wanting as regards the navy; and even landsmen may, without much difficulty, read their meaning. Now, it is an article in a magazine, showing the inadequate number of stokers in the navy, and the disastrous results which may possibly occur in war. Again, it is the naval engineers, of whom the numbers are said to be entirely insufficient. Or it may be that a great sailor calls attention to the fact, again and again, that the *personnel* of the navy is without a reserve worthy

of the name, while foreign nations have large reserves. And from time to time one hears that many ships are armed with guns of obsolete pattern, and that foreign nations are far in advance of us in this matter. But those civilians who know, or think they know, console themselves with the thought that Great Britain can always overtake her competitors owing to her enormous resources and her great facilities for the manufacture of guns and warlike material. A soldier knows this to be sophistry. These signs must be taken in conjunction with the fact that in the time of scare the "greatest activity prevails" in all the dockyards and naval arsenals. The Press is always pleased with sudden activity—it gives something to write about—disregarding the fact that such increased activity is a sure sign of unreadiness, and that it really means that every nerve is being strained to make good if possible at the last moment the neglect of the past.

"My contention is that in case of a war with a maritime Power we should in a few months have at least two hundred and fifty thousand men afloat, and at the present time we have, including all the reserves, but excluding boys in training-ships, etc., roughly, one hundred and fifty thousand available. We should, I doubt not, endeavour to make up for this shortage in various ways. We could not have recourse to the old remedy of the press gang.

"We should give bounties; we should, perhaps, embark regiments; we should, I fear, 'man' many

ships with crews deficient in number and still more in quality; we should be unprepared as usual, and the result might be disastrous." *

Such is the view taken by a distinguished British admiral.

If this be true, it can only mean that the British navy will be defeated within a few months of the outbreak of hostilities; and that it is true is a notorious fact.

It must be clear to all men that universal service is as necessary for the efficiency of the navy as for the army.

Any official report that the navy is ready to carry out any duty it may be called upon to undertake, is probably of equal value with the official reports † as to the readiness of the army before the Boer war. The army, such as there was of it, was ready; the navy, such as there is of it, will also, quite possibly, be ready. But what will the navy have to undertake? Has the question been really considered? Probably not, for that which the army might, and probably would, be called upon to undertake had never been considered prior to the Boer war. Preparations had been made for the employ-

* "A Reserve for the Navy from the Navy." Lecture by Admiral the Hon. Sir E. R. Freemantle, G.C.B., C.M.G., Rear-Admiral of the United Kingdom. *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution*, vol. xlvi., August 15th, 1902, No. 294.

† It must not be forgotten that such reports are prepared for political purposes; and there appears no reason why they should be regarded as truthful.

ment of an army of fifty thousand men, whereas two hundred and fifty thousand men were required. Yet this might have been foreseen with a little simple thought. Even now after the great lesson of the Boer war the question does not appear to have been honestly thought out. Can the British army invade France or Germany? Paper armies, however large, do not win wars.

There is no good reason to suppose that the British navy is more efficient for the performance of its duties than the British army now is; and, if the truth were known, it is probably no more efficient than the British army was before the Boer war. The colonies cannot come to the assistance of the mother country with battleships, as they assisted with soldiers in the Boer war, for they have no means of building them.

It may be safely assumed that the strategy by which the navy will be directed, actuated by popular clamour and the self-interest of seaport towns, and directed by a civilian Council of War, will be bad; and that the navy will, at first, as did the army in the Boer war, suffer defeat. The British nation, with its present form of government, can, in fact, have but little hope of success in war against a great trained nation in arms; for it can neither foresee a war, nor evolve a definite object, nor prepare for war, nor efficiently conduct its peace strategy, nor permit its armaments to be directed in actual war according to the dictates of sound strategy.

CHAPTER XII

THE BRITISH FORM OF GOVERNMENT

A Council of War—Civilian Control of the Armed Forces—The Illustration afforded by the Boer War—The British Constitution and a War of the Future.

THE unfortunate form of government under which Great Britain and her colonies labour must always necessitate greater strength in the field than would otherwise be the case, to make up, if possible, for the strategical faults which are the direct outcome of so faulty a system of leadership.

The principle of civilian control, even in war, is an axiom with the British people; the nation fears its soldiers; it fears lest they, gaining the upper hand, should establish a military despotism; and, more than all, lest they, the peace-loving inhabitants, be forced to serve as soldiers.

This sentiment is epitomised in the preamble to the Army Act, which lays down that an army is illegal except with the consent of Parliament. In other words, the consent of Parliament must be

obtained before the men of the British nation can be permitted to defend their hearths and homes and all that is dear to them.

It is an obvious absurdity, but it serves to show the determination of the British people that all soldiers must at all times be held in strict subjection. This determination applies equally, presumably, to the navy; and hence it is that the army is commanded by the Secretary of State for War, a civilian; while the navy, more unfortunate still, is without a single head, but is commanded by a committee, of which the principal is a civilian.

It is probably unnecessary to add that there is no single brain responsible for the two arms of the nation, the army and the navy; much less for the direction of the three great branches of the conduct of war on which the fate of the nation rests—peace strategy, preparation for war, actual operations. The weapons of the nation are directed by the Cabinet, a Council of War, consisting, needless to say, of civilians; and yet it is a fundamental principle of war that all the armed forces of a nation, whether on sea or land, should be directed by one single brain. If, moreover, success would in modern times be achieved, that single brain should be that of the greatest strategist, whether soldier or sailor, that the nation can produce.

To give one single example. There is at the present time—January, 1903—an agitation on foot to enquire into the food supply of Great Britain in

time of war. It is but now becoming apparent that Great Britain is not provisioned for a siege. Yet Great Britain is the citadel of the Empire, and must at all costs hold out until the whole Empire can rally to her assistance. This is the most rudimentary of all questions in preparation for war, and it is apparently left to private, not even expert, enterprise to deal with.

The strategy which directs the arms of a nation is, as it were, a game of chess. If a nation were about to compete for a great stake in a game of chess with another nation, would the people select as their representative one single man, and that man the greatest chess-player the nation could produce, or would they select an assortment of men none of whom had ever seen a chess-board or had in any way studied the game?

And yet the strategy of the British nation is directed in war as in peace by a Cabinet, no single member of which has in all probability as much as read the very Euclid of strategy, Hamley's "Operations of War."

This Council of War is, moreover, liable at short notice to be ousted from its position by another Council of War having diametrically opposite views.

It has been said that "a Council of War never fights," and that no general worthy of the name has called a Council of War more than once. An army directed by a Council of War, pitted against a com-

paratively equal adversary directed by one single brain, is in fact doomed to defeat. For the single brain can at least evolve and endeavour to carry to its legitimate issue a definite plan. Not so, however, the Council of War. Children even are taught that "too many cooks spoil the broth." How should an Empire be successfully directed in its peace strategy, its preparation for war, and in the actual operations of war by a Council of War composed of civilians?

It is a faulty form of government, which can only result in defeat. The Spanish Junta in the Peninsular war is proverbial; it was the curse of the country and its allies.

In the Boer war the first result of Great Britain's faulty form of government and civilian control of the army was the entire absence of all peace strategy and preparation for the Boer war. Preparation for war has place in peace-time, when peace matters are of paramount importance, and when the thoughts of the whole nation, with the exception of a small section of soldiers, are far from the subject of war. Any subject for the time being out of the national mind is liable in all popularly governed nations to be starved, from a pecuniary point of view. Such starvation means unpreparedness for war. Every penny spent has to be strictly accounted for to the public. To them the last drainage scheme or the water supply of the capital, or, indeed, any other town, is of vastly more importance than preparation

for a war which may never occur. War is a remote contingency, but the drainage scheme enlists all their sympathies. Increase to a voluntary army means increased expenditure; increased expenditure means increased taxation, which means much bitter opposition, with the by no means remote possibility of loss of office to the party in power. It is but natural that, under such circumstances, the party in power should seek to lessen the taxation as much as possible. What more easy than to lessen it on military matters, which are for the time being out of the public mind? It is only when the nation is aroused to a sense of fear by a scare that there is any attempt to prepare the nation for a serious war. Such a scare disappears, as is the nature of things, as quickly as it arises, and any makeshift that will allay popular feeling for the time being is sufficient. Does the army require more guns? Very good; we will increase the number of batteries. We will cut down some of the existing six-gun batteries to four-gun batteries, and with the surplus guns thus obtained we will form new batteries. What matters it that these new batteries, as well as the old ones, will be inefficient in case of war? War is far off; we have, at all events, quieted down the people, and we have done it without increased taxation. We have, moreover, increased the number of batteries—that is, of guns, on paper—and the public need never know, for soldiers are forbidden to write to the Press.

But the results do not stop here. Soldiers, like their civilian brothers, are not all fools. Many of them know that the army is short in guns, and that, on the outbreak of war against a civilised enemy, they will be at a sad disadvantage. They know that the want in guns must be paid for by blood. They know, moreover, that they are the men who must bear the responsibility for defeat in the minds of the ignorant populace. They should, therefore, doubtless work all the harder, in order to compensate by their knowledge of war the deficiencies in the armaments of the country. Quite so; but is it in human nature to work when those above treat the subject with childish levity? The iron cannot but enter the soul of those to whom the honour and security of their country is something more than a mere figure of speech.

The second result was the faulty system of leadership involved in civilian control, and the consequent subordination of strategy to political considerations and to exaggerated ideas of humanity.*

Soldiers of the British nation are unfortunately brought up to look upon the civil power with such respect that they cannot divest themselves of a feeling of subordination towards a representative of that government in time of war. This respect must

* The Refugee, or Concentration Camp, which maintained the women and children of the enemy in comfort, and thus permitted the manhood of the nation to continue the struggle, will doubtless recur to men's minds.

lead them to give undue weight to the opinions of such a representative, even on military subjects, which a civilian cannot be expected to understand. Such a civilian representative of the Government will naturally, being ignorant of strategy, give political considerations the precedence over strategical, and, being Commander-in-Chief, his opinions will carry great weight—amounting, as they do, to orders—faulty strategy being the outcome. Faulty strategy is not, perhaps, of great importance in most of the so-called wars in which Great Britain is engaged—wars against savages who are too ignorant to take advantage of strategical mistakes. Such mistakes will be rectified sooner or later during the war—at some considerable cost of blood indeed, but still they will be rectified; and it is only the soldier who pays; and, after all, he is employed for the purpose.

The case is, however, very different when war is being waged against a civilised nation, such as the Boers—a nation fairly well armed, and, to some slight extent, capable of taking advantage of strategical mistakes. In such a case the existence of the Empire is at stake.

The Boers, however, showed themselves to be indifferent strategists, and unable to take full advantage of our mistakes. What would have been the result, at the commencement of the war, had the Boers been continental soldiers, led by scientific continental generals, able to push home

an attack, and to disregard popular clamour and prejudice?

One mistake in naval strategy similar to that committed by the British in detaching a portion of its force to Dundee in the Boer war, will, against a European nation, be sufficient to hand over the command of the sea together with the power of invasion to the enemy; for it will mean the destruction of one-third of the available British fleet.

A war against a highly trained European nation—compared with which the Boer war will be child's play—a war against a nation in arms, led by men who, not content with their own petty experiences, have learnt war after years of study of the great masters, who have trained themselves to take full advantage of the slightest mistakes, of the smallest opening given by their adversary—is at all times liable to break out; and in such a war strategical mistakes—mistakes brought about by the suggestions, let us call them, made to the military or naval authorities by persons in high places having no training and unqualified to advise by reason of want of thought and study of the military art—will probably cause the downfall of the Empire. Strategical mistakes against savages cost blood and money; the same mistakes against a fairly well armed and civilised, but partially trained, badly led, and small, nation cost infinitely more blood and money, and, in addition, risk, as in the Boer war, the dismemberment of the Empire; it is therefore an obvious

inference that the same mistakes in face of European nations highly trained, perfectly organised, led by the most scientific soldiers or sailors the world has ever seen, and backed by the whole force of a great nation, must be paid for at a cost in British blood and money that one can hardly bear to contemplate, and, it is not too much to say, by the downfall of the Empire.

It has been said that the British Government refrained from all interference with the actual conduct of the British forces in the Boer war in the field. The statement is incorrect. The mere presence of a civilian Governor, termed Commander-in-Chief, in any part of South Africa, was interference on the part of the Government with soldiers who bore the responsibility for success or failure.

Mahan speaks of the power of trusting subordinates as a transcendent quality. This quality is not confined to individuals, but applies equally to nations. Without possessing this quality a general or admiral can hardly hope to succeed, and neither can a nation. The nation that cannot put implicit trust in its admirals and generals can hardly hope to succeed in war.

There are two methods of trusting a subordinate. The first is, to give that subordinate full power, and to refrain, no matter how apparently faulty his methods may be, from interference by thought, word, or deed. The second is, to give the subordinate

apparently full powers, while letting him clearly understand that his every movement is being watched and criticised, and that interference will be instant on the commission of any fault.

The second course is the correct course when the subordinate is ignorant of his work, and when the master is a master in the work.

The first course is the correct course when the master is ignorant of the work and the subordinate is proficient.

In the special case in point, the subordinate, the British Generals were proficient in the work; or, if not proficient in the eyes of the Government and of the populace, possessed, at the least, a knowledge of the work out of all comparison superior to that possessed by the master, the British Government.

Such being the case, the presence of civilian representatives of the British Government in South Africa, except as subordinates to British Generals, to do such work as they were ordered to do, was an unwarrantable interference on the part of the Government with British Generals.

The man who, being sick, calls in a doctor, and refuses to take his advice, is a fool; the nation which, knowing it must fight, calls on its military experts and yet refuses to take their advice, is a fool.

The third result of the faulty form of the British Government was the absence of discipline and self-control on the part of the nation itself.

The freedom given to Boer spies in Cape Colony and in Great Britain; the speeches of disloyal members of Parliament; the disloyal writings of the Press and through the post; the criticism of generals while operations were in progress; all these are notorious, and the encouragement they gave to the Boers can hardly be over-estimated. The Worcester Congress alone, a child of representative government, was a disgrace to any nation of modern days.

It was, indeed, the firm conviction held by the Boers that the British nation was divided against itself, and that it was only a matter of time for a change of Government, and consequently of policy to occur, which induced them to continue the struggle which they would otherwise have abandoned.

Such licence on the part of the British nation was a gross national crime; and the Government, fearing for its popularity, made no effort to check it.

These are the main points in which the British form of government has failed in the actual operation of war.

* * * * * *

Wars are not, in modern days, made by the rulers of a country, but by the voice of the people. Unless, therefore, the great majority of a nation is in favour of war, that war will not take place; or, if it take place, it will be because one combatant deliberately

forces it on the other. Although a statesman may consider war to be inevitable or desirable, he yet must first bring the people to his way of thinking. He is, in fact, powerless to act without the consent of his colleagues and of the people; and this is the case with a "nation in arms" as well as with a popularly governed nation.

More especially is it, however, the case when a nation has a popular government. Here each member of the nation and each member of a very powerful Press considers that he has a right to know each preliminary step that diplomacy may take, and that he has a right to have his own opinion and his say in the matter. The nation, and consequently the enemy, must, in fact, be taken into the confidence of the Government. Such a condition of affairs may possibly be right, but it certainly is not conducive to success in war.

Under universal service, on the other hand, the nation, being disciplined, trusts its leaders. Success in war against a great modern Power must, to a great extent, depend on the secrecy with which the first blow is prepared, and on the suddenness with which it is delivered. But there can be no secrecy when the whole nation must be worked up into the proper frame of mind, by being taken into the confidence of its Government; when members of Parliament can make indiscreet enquiries into the most secret details; when foreigners are permitted to reside, unregistered, in the country; where pigeon

lofts may everywhere be established; where post office censorship is not permitted except martial law be declared; and there can be no suddenness when volunteers with which to conduct the war must be called for through the medium of the public Press.

It is difficult to see how, under such circumstances, a nation can undertake a war with any hope of success; except, indeed, against a nation labouring under similar disadvantages.

As has been seen, the fear of becoming embroiled with a third Power is no sufficient cause for delaying the date of the declaration of war. The distinction must be drawn between pure harmless sympathy and actual co-operation. Want of sympathy never yet hurt either man or nation; but active assistance either to one's self or to one's adversary is a factor of primary importance. But peace strategy, which is responsible for converting a possible enemy into a friend in view of an expected war with another nation, has failed if success is not ensured long before the outbreak of war. To delay the declaration of war, with all the ensuing train of strategical faults, in order to make fresh efforts to gain over a possible enemy is to be outwitted by the adversary. It is the better course to recognise the fact, and by declaring or forcing on the war at the proper date to retain at least the strategical advantage gained by commencing the war at one's own convenience. If need be, even the risk of engaging two enemies in place of one must be taken rather than throw away the strategical advantages

which preparedness gives. If the nation be in a fit state of preparation, this contingency will have been foreseen and provided for; if unprepared, it is wiser to give up the contested point if possible, and retire with a good grace to await a more suitable opportunity; but such action requires a perfect control over the populace.

Is this possible in a popularly governed nation? Is it possible to raise popular feeling to the fever-heat necessary to lead it to declare war, or to allay it at a moment's notice? Assuredly not; yet this is a point which must be grasped by any nation which would be successful in war. German national sentiment has long been prepared for a war against Great Britain; but it is held in a leash by the ruler of the nation, and is manipulated at will.

Under representative government war cannot be declared at the decisive moment—that is, under representative government sound strategy is impossible.

Let us suppose Great Britain to be at war with a naval power; the result of the struggle for the command of the sea will depend less on the material strength of the fleets than on the strategy and tactics under which that material strength is exercised.* This strategy will depend on whether the British leader is trammelled or untrammelled by powerful opposition, by popular clamour, and by faddists—that is, whether the Government be strong enough and sufficiently unanimous to recognise the fact that war is inevitable,

* The war between China and Japan affords an illustration.

to seize opportunities and force on the war at Great Britain's convenience; but this is out of the question under representative government. It will also depend on whether our admirals are trammelled or untrammelled by political considerations in the exercise of their strategy and tactics; but this is equally beyond doubt under representative government.

The outcry, for instance, of coast towns which fear the visit of hostile cruisers will in all probability force a representative government to cast strategy to the winds, and to order the retention of guardships at threatened points in place of employing every available ship at the decisive point.

Numerous other factors, it is true, make for victory or defeat; such, for instance, as seamanship or the handling of single ships. But these factors are of small importance compared with the great ones—strategy and tactics. For strategy consists in bringing the greatest preponderating force possible against the enemy at the decisive point of the theatre of war; while tactics similarly consists in bringing the greatest possible preponderating force against the enemy at the decisive point of the battlefield. The bravery of men and the good handling of small units could, in the past, make up to a certain extent for faulty strategy and bad tactics—to-day it is different. The bravery of the French soldier (and there was no braver in the world), the fine leading of the French company officer (and there was none better in the world), availed nothing against the superior strategy and tactics of the German

Generals. Our own experiences in the Boer war have taught similar lessons. And so, more than ever, must it be in the future, where superior strategy and tactics will bring to bear such an awful overwhelming fire from modern weapons, that human nature, however brave, will be unable to withstand it; and the fine leading of small units, such as a battalion or a brigade of infantry, or a single ship of war, will not for one moment be able to compete against it.

If a nation would be successful in war, either her statesmen must give their closest and lifelong attention to the study of strategy, or her soldiers and sailors must be permitted to dictate absolutely in all questions relating to peace strategy, to preparation for, and the actual conduct of war.

The Franco-German war astonished the world, inasmuch as it showed the completeness of the information necessary to the safe conduct of the war gained by the Germans. Every detail of French organisation or lack of organisation was known; every fortress, every possible defensive position; the details of the towns, the amount of supplies generally available; the name and character of each French General, this man who would run his head against a brick wall for choice, that one who preferred to go round; all their little foibles; this one who believed in artillery, that one who did not; this one who, almost disregarding his own trifling experiences in the Crimea and in Italy, had, like the German Generals themselves and like Napoleon, learnt war from a close and deep study

of the great masters of war and of centuries of thought, and that other who, content with the experience gained from his own childish reminiscences of fights against savages in Algiers, did not believe in study, but believed himself to be a born soldier—all was apparently known and traded on.

The fact that the French army had been largely employed in fighting savages was held by Moltke as sufficient reason for writing that it would probably be wanting in discipline.

And contrast this with the British preparation for the Boer war—a war that endangered the very existence of the British Empire. Why is this? The question is answered by another. What is the cost of preparation for war? A nation cannot reorganise and increase its artillery and its cavalry; it cannot have good maps of countries with which war may break out; it cannot have emissaries, from the military attaché down to the lowest class spy, scattered broadcast throughout a country or countries, watching and reporting every military movement, the smallest military detail; it cannot gain information of the most secret matters appertaining to the diplomatic or military services; without an enormous expenditure of money. And yet without this expenditure the intelligence cannot be complete; and this want of intelligence will demand its payment in blood, possibly also, nay, probably, in defeat. And what do European nations pay to obtain intelligence of their possible adversaries? What did the Boers pay for their

secret service, for their war preparations with Great Britain? Secrecy in these matters is essential, and no nation will willingly divulge the amount of its expenditure on war preparations.

Expenditure on secret preparation for war is impossible to a nation which maintains the terribly expensive and inefficient machine termed a voluntary navy and army; it is possible only to a nation in which every man considers it his duty to train, and, if necessary, to fight for his country. It cannot, moreover, if it be a nation which gives but little thought to war, a nation with voluntary enlistment, find trained men with which to discover its possible enemy's secrets. It is only a nation all the men of which are trained soldiers which can furnish the necessary spies in sufficient number. Every German waiter in England, every French cook that has served his time is qualified to act, and probably will, if occasion arise, as a spy.

Preparation is impossible to a nation governed by representative government; it requires an Opposition in the Houses of Legislature, an Opposition entirely ignorant of what war means, an Opposition, moreover, which in its ignorance cares nothing of the risk to which it may expose its country so only it incommode the party in power, to drag out the details and to make them public.

The more popular the Government the more hopeless is it to keep such matters secret.

It was but a short time ago that Germany increased

her naval expenditure, and much opposition in the Reichstag divulged this matter, which, in the interests of the German nation, should have been most secret. In such a nation, however, things that appear on the surface are not the only things that exist. The nation is a nation of soldiers or sailors; a nation of disciplined men who have been taught to look on the interests of the Fatherland as the most important interest in a man's life. Such a nation does not lightly divulge its secrets, and when it prepares for war it does so secretly and silently with a steadfast determination to win. It has experience—a bitter experience—of what defeat means. What chance has a nation which does not prepare for war, even when she has a few more ships, against such a nation? As much chance as an ordinary man has against a trained pugilist.

* * * * * *

National ignorance in modern times means national humiliation and ultimate downfall. National knowledge of war is only possible where all are soldiers or sailors.

It does not seem to be fully recognised in Great Britain and in her colonies that war, properly so called, is a struggle between two nations for life or death. The campaigns we engage in every year of our national existence are not war in the proper sense of the term. Our numerous fights against savages, the outcome of which is never for a moment in doubt, and our immunity for the past hundred

years from a serious life-and-death struggle are undoubtedly responsible for a certain levity in the British way of considering war. There is no levity in the view of war taken by the French and German nations, for to them it is a serious matter, a matter of life and death.* And Great Britain will soon, it is clear, be engaged in a life-and-death struggle—a struggle such as we have no conception of. A struggle wholly different to the Indian Frontier wars —totally unlike the Egyptian wars—unlike even the Crimean war, in which failure was practically impossible, and in which the fate of the Empire was never for a moment in question ; but somewhat similar, perhaps, in its possible after-effects in case of defeat to the Boer war. Providence has given us our warning in the Boer war, and seldom warns twice. The British race has tasted to a very small extent only the bitterness of defeat in the Boer war. How bitter the taste of final defeat and invasion would be, the British nation has no experience of—or if once tasted the taste has been forgotten. Yet one small error in strategy may bring about such a defeat, and not one error alone, but twenty errors in strategy are certain to take place in any war in which Great Britain may engage under her present leadership. Under her present form of government, a representative or popular government, Great Britain's

* These nations maintain on their frontiers cavalry divisions at war strength ready to move at a moment's notice, in order to forestall if possible a sudden and secret move on the part of an unprincipled adversary.

defeat is assured, if she is pitted against any trained, disciplined, and educated nation.

Referring to France in 1799, Count Yorcke von Wartenburg, of the Prussian General Staff, writes :— "The first appearance of the modern representative system of government on the continent had furnished ample evidence of the vacillating and constantly changing nature of such governments, and shown at the same time that such a system must, in the exposed position of a continental state, lead quite logically to constant disaster."*

This is to-day true of Great Britain; for, with the introduction and perfection of the power of steam, the defensive power of the sea as an obstacle to the advance of a hostile army has diminished by far more than one-half. It is true that to-day, as of yore, the command of the sea is the decisive factor; but Great Britain in the past fought many a fierce and prolonged struggle for the mastery of the sea, on which her very existence, even in those days, depended. There were occasions, moreover, in which Great Britain lost; and it then became a question of invasion. In this question the wind was, before the introduction of steam, a decisive factor; with an adverse wind an invading army could not be put across; with a favourable wind, a landing must be effected on a lee shore. But, moreover, this waiting on the wind, the cause of innumerable delays, would have afforded a respite to Great Britain. It was

* "Napoleon as a General."

thus the case that the difficulties of taking advantage of a temporary command of the sea were, in the past almost insuperable; and yet Napoleon was prepared not only to face them, but, as was his custom, to overcome them. In modern times, the difficulties of invasion, provided the temporary command of the sea be gained, no longer exist. Great Britain is no longer a Power safe behind its barrier of the sea, but is an exposed state to which the evils of faulty leadership will be every whit as disastrous as to continental nations.

The great questions which must be answered by the people of the British Empire are these. Is the present method of leadership so dear to the heart of the Englishman that he prefers to risk certain defeat and invasion rather than change it? Is the desire to escape, at all costs, the obvious duty of every able-bodied man, that of fighting for his country, so intense that Englishmen will rather face the prospect of destruction than introduce universal service either as soldier or sailor? Is it too much to ask the leading commercial nation of the day, the greatest business nation the world has ever seen, to introduce measures which will, with the enormous resources of the Empire, ensure success, even against all the great powers of the world, and will give the British Empire a position which will enable it absolutely to dictate to, and keep the peace of, the world? Is it too much to ask of the Great British Empire to discard its absurd fear of its own army

and its own navy, which after all are made up of Britishers, and to allow soldiers to run the former, and sailors to run the latter, without the ridiculous interference of incompetent civilians?

Surely the British soldier is worthy of trust. He has fought for his country in every corner of the world with a gallantry and determination that can hardly be surpassed; his chief fault that he underestimates the value of his own life. He has by his natural capacity and untaught genius for war saved the situation when other nationalities would have failed. He has again and again rescued the country from the dilemma into which it has been plunged by the ignorance, moral cowardice, self-interest, or what you will of its political leaders. And these political leaders; there are those who have not hesitated to bring humiliation on the country rather than risk loss of office; there are those, and these not the least in renown and in the public estimation, who have deliberately endeavoured to hand over a portion of the British Islands themselves to avowed rebels and enemies of the country, the motive being, it must be apparent, not patriotism, not justice, but self-seeking. Let us Englishmen thank God that there was one Englishman who, rather than sacrifice his country, cut adrift from that party which sought to ruin it; let us thank God that this selfsame man yet lived to take the reins in this last great crisis. The British people cannot trust its King; it cannot trust its soldiers or sailors;

it cannot implicitly trust a proved statesman; it can yet venture to trust its destinies to a great mob of professional politicians, which includes in its numbers avowed enemies of the country, secret enemies of the country, and men, not of the rabble, not of the criminal classes, but high in the public esteem, who do not, it would seem, hesitate to barter the blood of their countrymen for notoriety or place.*

* * * * * *

For an army to be besieged in a fortress at the commencement of a campaign is merely to say in other words that the nation to which the army belongs is unready for war. Since 1878, the date of the last great example of the helplessness of a besieged army, Great Britain has given no less than five examples of her troops, shut up in, generally speaking, hastily improvised fortresses. These are

* It is, of course, the case that, included in the politician class, there are many men animated by a sincere love and devotion for their country; men in whom thoughts of self-interest have no place; but these, often swamped, as they are, by those of a different stamp, are, unless they combine pre-eminent ability with their patriotism, unable to rise above the ruck, and are, consequently, helpless for good or evil.

Additional Note by Professor Ronald Ross.—Many of the remarks made in this book would apply with equal force to almost all the public services and institutions. After certain experiences in connection with some of these, I would strongly advise my countrymen to force a microscopical enquiry into every hole and corner of public administration, and into the doings of the chatterers, idlers, wire-pullers, and cowards who so frequently dominate the national efforts in every direction, and are the real cause of the danger which threatens the Empire.

Khartoum, Manipur, Chitral, Coomassie, and the last examples those of the Boer war. That is, in all her principal military operations since 1878, with the exception of Tel-el-Kebir, of Omdurman, and of Burmah, Great Britain has been unprepared.

At the commencement of the great war with France at the end of the eighteenth century, Great Britain was unprepared for war. Fortunately for her, France was still more unprepared, owing to the Revolution.

Great Britain was unprepared for the Crimean war; while her inexcusable lack of preparation for the Boer war which might clearly have been foreseen for at least ten years, should have resulted in disaster to the Empire.

The inference is that under her present form of government, Great Britain will never be ready for any war.

The civilian politician has, throughout the past century, exhibited a marked incapacity for leadership; and it would seem desirable that the British people should remove all control in matters connected with peace strategy, preparation for war, and the conduct of war, from the hands of these party politicians.

Soldiers pay for bad leadership with their blood. How long will Englishmen unaroused watch their soldiers, these soldiers who have shed their blood for their country in every quarter of the globe, who have fought uncomplainingly against heavy odds,

who, though victorious, have yet to see their generals vilified, themselves abused, sacrificed to that fetish, the British Constitution? How long will Englishmen rest content with the rule of the party politician, the rule of ignorance and self-interest which parades under the mask of liberty? Military despotism, even mob government, which is at least honest in its savage love of country, is almost preferable. Or will they make that last great sacrifice of all? Will they stare horrid defeat in the face, not from a distance of six thousand miles, but at home; will they see their country over-run; their homes destroyed; their cities bombarded and gutted; their trade and commerce irretrievably ruined; their loved women and children dying of hunger and exposure?

Let British volunteers who have seen war tell their kinsfolk what war means. Let them describe how men are hunted from this hiding-place to that; how, all-powerless, they watch from afar off their homes destroyed, their weeping women and children dragged away; how, revisiting the place the troops have left, they find but smoking ruins; how, searching like thieves, starting at every sound, they find perhaps some treasured trifle, some petty thing to remind them of the loved ones they have lost, it may be, for ever. Let them say how these are but the ordinary accessories of war, even of that most culpably humane war, the Boer war; let them remind their kinsfolk that, even as is bravery, so is

humanity a trait of the British soldier; let them say that in most wars it is but a common occurrence that men should be shot or hanged in front even of their wives, mothers, sisters; and that an invasion of England would be conducted without pity, with severity verging on atrocity, in order that all resistance might be suppressed with the smallest delay possible. War is terrible; but how much more terrible for the vanquished!*

* * * * * * *

The Constitution exists for the country; the country in no wise exists for the Constitution; those who place

* It seems generally to be thought that for the purpose of invading Great Britain the enemy would through many months concentrate many hundreds of thousands of men, vast supplies, and the necessary amount of shipping, at the port of embarkation. That these arrangements would be watched through telescopes with much interest by the British fleet. That when the audacious enemy, after due declaration of his intention, ventured to put to sea, the winds would rise and the sea roughen; and that such of the transports as failed to sink would be destroyed by the British fleet. That, if by chance, through the unavoidable absence of the British fleet, the enemy's army, to the number of a hundred thousand men, succeeded in effecting a landing, it would quickly be annihilated, if not by the regular army, then at least by the volunteers, assisted by a justly incensed populace. But in thinking thus, the British people insist upon attributing to the whole world their own abhorence of underhand methods and of secrecy (see Chap. XIV.). It must not be supposed that Great Britain would recover from the effects of invasion as did France; the country is not self-supporting as is France; and her people depend for very existence on imported food. A successful invasion of Great Britain would be followed by horrors of famine and mob government for which there would probably be no parallel in history.

the interests of the Constitution before those of the country are guilty of disloyalty to the latter.

The suspension of the Constitution in Cape Colony, that is the withdrawal of all power from the hands of party politicians, was an obvious strategical necessity in the Boer war; a similar necessity, but infinitely more acute, will arise in Great Britain on the outbreak of war with any Continental Power.* In such an event, defeat at sea and invasion may be expected unless the conduct of the war be handed over to the King and the military and naval forces, and unless martial law be proclaimed and enforced throughout the country; for a nation without a head is in war doomed to defeat.

It is to be hoped that politicians of all parties, in

* Mr. Balfour, speaking at Liverpool (*Times*, Feb. 14th, 1903), and criticising Lord Rosebery's suggestion that Lord Kitchener should be made War Minister not responsible to the Cabinet, spoke as follows:—

"If you attempt an experiment on any principle of that kind, you destroy the whole theory of Cabinet solidarity. (Cheers.) A great soldier put in that position might, for example, make demands on purely military grounds which no Chancellor of the Exchequer could be asked to accept. What is his position to be? Is he to resign or to submit? (Hear, hear.) In either case you evidently have the greatest difficulty; and are you going to expect the members of a Cabinet to defend the policy of a Minister who is not one of themselves in any true sense, who is not bound to them by ties of party loyalty at all, who will not go out when they go out, who is independent of them, who belongs to a different category and sphere altogether? Of course the thing is impossible."

It is indeed clear that a party government, whether it be in South Africa or in Great Britain, could by no means be brought to subordinate party interests to national interests.

whose hands the control of the country is at present vested, will see the necessity for this course and will take the necessary steps in the matter; for if they fail one of the following events will assuredly occur:—

1. After the first defeats the King, backed by the armed forces, will seize control, and may ultimately save his country.

2. The leading soldier, backed by the armed forces, will seize control, and may save his country.

3. The mob,* but only after defeat, will intervene with all the resulting horrors of mob government, followed by a military despotism of the worst type. Great Britain has not the experience of invasion and revolution that France has gained.

And so the pendulum of government may be expected to ultimately come to rest in some form of national military despotism, that is, in universal service.

But this desirable result will only be attained, so far as one can judge, when the British nation, having tasted defeat, has learnt its lesson through bitter adversity. Its colonies gone, its sea power gone, its fleets and commerce the prize of the victor, itself a petty, insignificant, and third-rate power, lacking the means to strike at an enemy, will adopt universal service to safeguard its few remaining riches. Or, it

* There is no reason to suppose that in such a national calamity the British mobs would be one whit more temperate than the French mob in the worst days of the Commune; and mob Government would not be confined to London, but would reign supreme throughout the country.

may well be that, having become a province of its conqueror, universal service will be forced upon it.*

Universal service and a revolution in the system of leadership of the nation is the sole hope of the British people; it is an urgent necessity, for the nation is, at this present moment, at war. A few years hence and reform will come too late.

* * * * * *

All things move in nature.

A nation cannot stand still, its movement must still be in advance, or retrograde.

A petty kingdom, half savage, becomes an annoyance to a great Empire, and is either suppressed or is permitted to grow, to stretch its muscles, to feel its ever-growing power, to become ambitious.

And the great Empire, taking no thought for its past struggles when it was a petty kingdom, is steeped in sloth. The annoyance reaches a climax; and the great Empire, slowly awakening, determines, once for all, to suppress it.

But lo! it is too late. That which was but lately

* The annexation of a thickly populated country is a far more simple operation than is that of a sparsely populated country; for the invader holds as a weapon the power of starvation. Great Britain, for example, once disarmed could be held in subjection for the short time necessary to teach the people to accept the inevitable by a hundred thousand men. Turbulence in any district could at once be suppressed by withholding supplies. No sentiment would be displayed by the invader in the conquest of Great Britain; for Continental Powers recognise that sentiment is out of place in war. Annexation can best be effected by stern discipline, that is, by the introduction of universal service.

a petty annoyance is now a determined and powerful adversary: an adversary with muscles, young certainly, but hard with training, and with the will and determination to attack and destroy its powerful enemy. Of such was the great Spanish Empire and the petty nation of sea thieves in England.

The great Spanish nation, slothful and content in its ease, comfort, and riches; the sea thieves, struggling to wrest a mere existence from the sea, but daily growing in strength and audacity. Its pastime to "harry the Spanish main."

And the great Empire organises and equips its Armada with which to sweep its impudent foe from its path, and meets defeat at the hands of its petty but hardy adversary,

Thereafter the great Empire sinks steadily into insignificance, until it ultimately meets its death at the hands of the child of its petty adversary.

Four hundred years later that petty nation of sea thieves has become the great nation of the day.

Steeped in sloth, it exists on the prestige of its past victories, and views with indifference its prestige, and even the source of its comforts, its commerce, slipping from its grasp.

And lo, a petty tribe of farmers, hardened in the struggle for existence, rises and strikes the slothful race. And the great nation too slothful to do aught else turns the other cheek, calling it magnanimity. And twenty years later that petty tribe of farmers, grown now to be a nation, seeing his sleeping

adversary, deliberately attempts to kill him in his sleep; and with his petty dagger stabs the great mass again and again. But the children of the great nation hasten to lend assistance and to destroy the vicious nation of farmers. And thus was an Empire born.

Will that Empire now rise in its strength, train its muscles, and throw off its sloth? or will it sink into deeper apathy than before, until such time as Nature directs a longer and keener weapon, backed with all the power of a great nation, to destroy an effete race? There is hope in the youth and vigour of the children.

PART IV

THE BRITISH EMPIRE AND TRAINED POWERS

CHAPTER XIII

THE HEART OF A NATION

IN bygone days, in the days of standing armies which consisted only of a small percentage of the male population, there was in each country but one great arsenal, from which the armies of the nation were supplied and maintained in a state of efficiency, and the capture of which entailed the defeat of the army; and, provided the victor pushed his advantage, the downfall of the nation. This arsenal was usually the capital or principal town, the centre of the country. It was the heart—the vital point—of the nation.

This system still prevails in two great nations of the world, which being governed by the unthinking populace are behind the times. Modern nations of which every man is a soldier, and the number of men in whose armies is approximately that of the male population, have been forced to decentralise their arsenals; so to speak, to break up the heart of the nation into small pieces, each of which must be destroyed before a death-blow can be struck.

The first great example in history of what was practically decentralisation, was the transfer of the

heart of the Russian nation from Moscow to St. Petersburg at a critical moment. Napoleon, straining every nerve, and exhausting himself to strike a fatal blow at the heart of Russia, discovered, when too late, that he had, at the cost of his own existence, inflicted but a flesh-wound.

Vienna was, in the Austro-Prussian war, the heart of Austria. France was, in the Franco-German war, a centralised nation. Paris, and Paris alone, was the heart; and the capture of Paris meant the defeat of France.

The terrible lesson of 1870 and 1871 taught France, and, indeed, the whole of Europe, to march with the times and to modernise themselves. The capture and destruction of Paris would now no longer necessarily mean the defeat of France. The defeat of the French armies, the manhood of the nation, can now only be completed when the whole male population is killed or captured and her numerous arsenals in the hands of her adversary.

This principle of decentralisation was greatly extended by the Boers, whose tiny arsenals of ammunition and rifles, money and food, were hidden throughout the country. By this means they, though overwhelmed by numbers, maintained the war for two years. The capture of Bloemfontein, of Pretoria, of all their towns, of their railways, in no way terminated their resistance. They maintained the struggle until assured that their hope of foreign intervention, or of a change of government in Great

Britain, was unfounded; and that further resistance was consequently hopeless.

All great modern nations, nations which have recognised the results of failure in war, have now, by the adoption of universal service and the consequent construction of arsenals throughout the country, decentralised the heart, or what was formerly the vital point; and can now no longer be struck down by one decisive blow.

Before such a nation succumbs the whole manhood of the nation must be overwhelmed and trodden under foot by its adversary.

Germany, Russia, Austria, Italy, and even Turkey, Bulgaria, and Servia, are similar to France in this respect; and each of these nations now fears to attack the other. The case is different with the two great Anglo-Saxon nations, which have enjoyed immunity from invasion, or, indeed, from any great war for the past hundred years.

The United States does not possess an army worthy of the name when compared with those of the great modern military nations. Her distance from any possible adversary except one is, however, so great that she would receive ample warning of an intended invasion. Her defensive force, the navy, must moreover be dealt with before any such invasion across a wide expanse of ocean would be possible. She possesses numerous large manufacturing towns, which could at short notice be converted into arsenals and bases for a great army composed of the

manhood of the nation. Even though, owing to a concatenation of misfortunes, her navy were destroyed, her territory invaded in overwhelming force, her petty standing army defeated and demoralised, still her vast size would render the seizure and effective occupation of her numerous great towns, railway lines, and waterways a stupendous operation, and one in which time would be an all-important factor.

For the time thus given to the nation would permit of a *levée en masse*, and of the organisation of arsenals, fortresses, and supply depôts ; and the invader would find himself opposed to the whole manhood of the nation in arms.

Such a struggle would last for years, and provided the manhood of the nation proved worthy and vigorous, notwithstanding long years of lack of self-discipline, the United States would in all probability triumph in the end. The United States is, in fact, to a certain extent decentralised, owing to her size and her distance from a possible adversary. It is still, however, a question whether the initial defeats of her armed forces, followed by the capture of her great centres of commerce and government, New York, Boston, and Washington, would not cause a collapse through her own national vices, lack of discipline and organisation.

The British Empire, the other great Anglo-Saxon nation, which is behind the times, has but newly come into existence. Great Britain alone of all the

countries forming the Empire, with the exception of Canada, maintains armed forces.

The Empire is therefore centralised in Great Britain, the mother country. The decisive defeat of Great Britain would entail—and of this there can be no question—the disintegration and collapse of the Empire as a whole.

Great Britain is therefore the heart, the citadel, the vital point of the Empire. Similarly to the United States, compared with modern military nations Great Britain has no army; for her heterogeneous paper army, compared with those of European nations, is unworthy of the name.

In contrast to the United States, Great Britain lies within easy reach of the great modern military nations.

Like the United States, she possesses numerous manufacturing towns, which could be converted, at short notice, provided such short notice were given, into arsenals and bases for a great army; but she has no fortresses or great supply depôts in existence, from which the manhood of the nation could be armed and supplied on emergency. Like the United States, she depends for security entirely on her navy—that is, on her defensive arm alone, and on the sea. As in the case of the United States, let us assume that, through one single misfortune or through faulty strategy, the British fleets in the vicinity of Great Britain were defeated; a modern military nation, or a combination of such, left with

the command of the sea; the country invaded by a nation in arms; and the petty British army defeated and demoralised. The limited size of Great Britain would preclude all hope of maintaining the struggle until the manhood of the nation could be called out and trained in a *levée en masse*, and the principal towns converted into arsenals, fortresses, and supply depôts.

Great Britain and the British Empire is, in fact, centralised in her one great land arsenal and supply depôt at Woolwich—that is, in London. The great trade and business interests of London, moreover, accentuate this centralisation.

The fall of London, or, it is even probable, a threat of bombardment, would cause the collapse of Great Britain and the consequent disintegration and downfall of the British Empire.

London is therefore the heart, the vital point of the Empire, which if struck would cause death.

But every nation possesses a vitality apart from the heart, which is the spirit of the nation. It is only when the manhood of a nation is overcome, whether by numbers or by its own national vices of faulty discipline. bad organisation, and unreadiness for war—the great work of national existence—that defeat and collapse ensue.

In 1870 the French armies, having been defeated by a nation in arms, the French capital seized, the untrained inhabitants, notwithstanding the size of the country, were unable to save the country from defeat.

And this defeat, a heavy blow struck at an untrained flabby nation such as the French nation then was, came near to being a death-blow.

But the collapse, had it ensued, would have been the result, not of German victories, but of inherent weakness in the French nation, caused by many years of an ill-disciplined and intemperate national existence.

French manhood, however, rose supreme in the hour of adversity, and, after a bitter struggle over its own vices, triumphed.

The great Roman Empire, effete with a long-continued, vicious national life, failed to recover from the blows inflicted by barbarians: her manhood overcome, she died of her own inherent weakness.

And so similarly the great Spanish Empire.

Let us contrast these instances with the conquest of the Boers. The Boers, two petty republics, but a nation in arms, were pitted against a great Empire. Their armies were defeated, their capitals, towns, railways, and country occupied or devastated. Their manhood was, however, only overcome by the removal of all means of subsistence from the country.

A trained, determined, and hardy nation has no vital point which, if merely struck, causes immediate death; it is only the untrained and voluptuous, the ease-loving and unwieldy nation to whom a simple blow means collapse. Such a nation contains within itself the seeds of decay, and a blow merely hastens the inevitable course of nature.

Lack of numbers or lack of self-discipline in the manhood of a nation are the only vital points through which a nation may come by its death. Lack of numbers is, in a nation, a fault of youth. Lack of self-discipline is a failing of age. The latter is a national vice. Time remedies the former; adversity alone will remedy the latter. A training to arms of the whole manhood of a nation without exception is, so far as history can tell us, the sole means of maintaining a nation free from national vice and licence, and in such a state of discipline as will enable it to retain its position and to keep pace with the progress of the world.

Without such training moral weakness for war grows apace and the end is inevitable; in modern times, it cannot be long delayed. Nature's fiat would seem to be "improvement or death."

A nation, like a man, on whom vice has as yet taken but a light hold, may easily, by the exercise of self-control, stamp out the vicious propensity and return to a cleanly and disciplined existence. Let it beware, however, how it permits vice to take a firm grip, for degradation develops rapidly—first, into apathetical indifference, then into a loss of all self-restraint, and at last into utter demoralisation and death. It is the part of the rulers of a nation to maintain an ever-vigilant watch, and to warn the people when freedom is about to degenerate into licence. A man's most thankless task is to warn his friend of the gulf towards which his footsteps tend;

and it is similarly a task which requires no small moral courage in a ruler to open the eyes of a nation to its own lack of discipline. But may God help the nation whose destiny is in the hands of men who, rather than risk abuse, public obloquy, and the loss of position, will maintain silence when clear speech is necessary. That which in a man who fails to warn a friend is merely an offence against friendship, is, in the ruler of a nation the gravest offence which he can commit; for it is moral cowardice.

CHAPTER XIV

GERMANY AND THE EMPIRE

AFTER her success against France in 1871, Germany, apparently recognising that a nation cannot remain stationary, would appear to have considered her strategical situation in the world, with a view to determining the great underlying and secret principle on which her definite plan of action should be based. Which was the nation by whose defeat she had most to gain, and which was the nation from whom she had most to fear? By the completion of her work against France she would definitely destroy her most bitter and hereditary enemy, and would gain so dominant a position in Western Europe as would, in all probability in the near future, force Holland and probably Belgium, if only in self-defence, to throw in their lot with the German Empire. The recuperation of France was rapid; and, as a defensive measure, she should not be permitted to recover but should again be struck down. Germany's peace strategy demanded the destruction of France. In 1875, in consequence, Germany sought occasion for war with France. It is said that it was the personal

influence of Queen Victoria which caused Germany to discard her object. It is, however, more probable that Germany recognised that she could not act the barbarous part dictated by strategy without coming face to face with a hostile combination of the great Powers of the world, who, in self-defence, could by no means permit the further aggrandisement of Germany. It would seem probable that it was the knowledge that Germany's strength was not at the time sufficiently developed to warrant her in facing the world in arms, which in reality caused her to desist. A deliberate and unprovoked attack on France, followed by the intervention of the great Powers and the consequent defeat of Germany, would entail the final extinction of Germany as a factor for good or evil. France was too obviously anxious to avoid war; and an attack on her, though undoubtedly correct strategy, would be murder pure and simple. The Powers of the world will only brook the deliberate and open murder of a nation when they themselves lose nothing thereby.

In 1878, when war broke out between Russia and Turkey, Great Britain's attention being attracted to the East, Germany again had an opportunity of attacking her enemy. The recuperation of France had, however, been so rapid, her eastern frontier was now so well defended by newly erected fortresses, and, above all, her adoption of universal service had rendered her so formidable, that a war offered by no means the prospect of easy success such as had been

offered in 1875. The engineering of an aggressive war was more difficult than in 1875, for Germany's methods had been exposed. Bismarck's efforts were therefore directed to the maintenance of peace in Europe. From this time onward the peace strategy of Germany would appear to have been without any object but that of peace. The German nation was thrown on the defensive; for, by her support of Great Britain against Russia at the Congress of Berlin after the Russo-Turkish war, she had converted Russia into an enemy. She had now two enemies to deal with; and in consequence formed an alliance with Austria, and afterwards with Italy—an alliance which was obviously a purely defensive measure. With this defensive measure Germany appears to have rested content until the accession of the present Emperor and the consequent retirement of Bismarck.

The present German Emperor, however, is a man trained in the school of Bismarck and Moltke; he is, as is well known, a soldier and a strategist; he is hardly the man to rest content with purely defensive measures. Defence alone, in peace strategy as in war strategy, means defeat and a retrograde movement; while success and advance is possible only to the offensive. From the date of the accession of the German Emperor, Germany's peace strategy would appear to have once more adopted a definite plan of action based on a deliberate offensive. Such offensive measures do not, needless to say, appear on the surface, for the offensive without secrecy loses its

chance of success. It may be, however, that the principal features in the policy of Germany of late years will give the key to the principle on which her offensive measures are based.

Which is the nation by whose defeat Germany has most to gain; and which is the nation from which she has most to fear?

She has most to fear from a combined attack by France and Russia; and hence the Triple Alliance. She has nothing to gain by the defeat of Russia. She has, now as formerly, everything to gain by the defeat of France; but this is an operation of such magnitude, an operation fraught with such danger to the German Empire, and an operation in which even success would entail such complete exhaustion, that it is one in which it would perhaps be suicidal in which to engage. An offensive against a "nation in arms" must entail such grave risks that absolute necessity can alone justify it.

An attack on Austria is unnecessary, as it would seem probable that a large portion of the present Austrian Empire will of itself, in the near future, come to form a part of the German Empire. It may well be, however, that, on the apparently impending dislocation of the Austrian Empire, it will be necessary to bring Bohemia and Austria (proper) as far as the Adriatic, within the iron bond of the German Empire. Such an operation would, however, it is probable, be conducted with but little difficulty, provided the Austrian army could be won over. If, on the other

hand, the army of Austria-Hungary holds together, the Empire will almost certainly continue to exist; and, being a nation in arms, will be practically invulnerable, except against a combination of states.

An offensive against the United States is at present entirely out of the question.

By the defeat of Great Britain everything is to be gained—prestige, supremacy at sea, commerce, riches, and a leading place as a World Power, even as Germany to-day holds a leading place as a Continental Power. By failure but little is to be lost, for Great Britain, having no army, cannot strike back; ultimate failure, however, is not to be feared, for offence cannot, in the end, be defeated by defence, save by a nation in arms prepared to deliver a great counter-stroke. The sudden and decisive defeat of Great Britain would add so enormously to the strength, both moral and material, of Germany, that it would place her in a position to dictate absolutely to France. Such a success would probably bring Holland and, it may even be, Belgium within the bonds of the German Empire, and Germany would gain a large extent of coast-line with fine harbours on the North Sea.

It would certainly appear that Germany's correct strategical course in her peace strategy is:—

1. To remain on the defensive against Russia and France.

2. To prepare for war, and a deliberate but secret offensive against Great Britain.

A most noticeable feature is that in the last few years Germany has made every effort to extend her oversea commerce. In so doing she has entered into deliberate competition with Great Britain and with the British Empire. She is, in fact, at the present moment waging a commercial war against the British Empire; a war which is daily attaining a more acute stage, and which must in the near future develop, unless unforeseen occurrences arise, into actual war. The increase to her fleet of late years shows that she intends to defend her growing commerce. The peculiar interest taken of late years in the German navy, as well as in the British navy, by the German Emperor, points clearly to the fact that the German navy will play an important part in the near future. The acquisition of Heligoland and the construction of the Kiel canal, strengthen enormously the naval strategical position of Germany in the North Sea. For the German fleet now possesses two means of egress from the Baltic Sea, where she formerly possessed but one. That nation which would blockade the German fleet in its harbours, must, at the outset of the war, be in a position to place a fleet of a strength greater than the whole German navy at each of these points of egress, where formerly but one point had to be blocked; for if this is not done grave danger is run of a sudden concentration of the whole German fleet on a portion of that of its adversary. Thus, by the construction of the Kiel canal, Germany

has more than doubled the strategical value of her fleet.

The German fleet that Great Britain must reckon with in the event of war is not as it appears on paper, but is more than double that strength. So far as Great Britain or any naval Power which hopes to blockade the German fleets is concerned, each German ship that is built will count as two ships; and in order to keep pace with Germany in preparation for a struggle for supremacy at sea, Germany's adversary must be prepared to build more than two ships for one, or must discard all thoughts of blockading the German fleets, must leave her commerce at the mercy of German cruisers, and must be prepared to fight for the command of the sea. Germany's possession of the Kiel canal—and of Heligoland, without which the canal would have been practically worthless—brings within reach of Germany a fair prospect of competing in the near future on equal terms with any adversary for the command of the North Sea. This in its turn opens up vast possibilities for the employment of her land forces over the sea.*

Germany is a great military nation, and more than in the past is her every measure made in accordance with some preconceived strategical plan.

* It will doubtless be noted that Great Britain has been forced to undertake the construction of a naval arsenal on the Firth of Forth from which to maintain a close watch on the Kiel Canal; this costly measure would, in all probability, have been unnecessary had she retained possession of Heligoland.

She does not undertake operations of any magnitude without some definite object in view, nor without first clearly recognising the effect such operations will have on her strategical position.

The measures so far enumerated point clearly to a struggle in the near future for supremacy in the North Sea. Any such attempt on the part of Germany will inevitably bring her to war with Great Britain. A consideration of these measures would seem to show that Germany's peace strategy is directed with a view to an offensive against Great Britain.

Is there any other action on the part of Germany which supports this view or throws further light on her possible intentions?

It must not be forgotten that the objects of the peace strategy of a nation which, engaged with another in the struggle for existence, has determined to gain success even at the cost of a great war are :—

1. To isolate and weaken the adversary.

2. To secure the co-operation, or, failing that, the neutrality of other nations.

The German Emperor's telegram to President Kruger will at once recur to men's minds. This telegram was at the time regarded in Great Britain as an ebullition of feeling on the part of a wayward boy. The man who could remove Bismarck from office without a revolution can hardly be considered a wayward child. Let us glance at the result of this telegram. There can be no doubt but that it con-

verted most Germans in South Africa into enemies to Great Britain, and that it gave the Boers fair reason to hope for German intervention and assistance in the event of war. It went far, in fact, to ensure war between Great Britain and the Boers, and to render it a certainty that Great Britain should not only be hampered in South Africa for the next half-century at least, but that Germany would be assured of allies in a future war. This telegram was not the outcome of a wayward boy's indignation; it was the result of the mature thought of a strategist. The one and only drawback to this telegram as a strategic stroke was the risk that it might lead to the exposure of Germany's designs; but this was hardly to be feared when Great Britain's blindness and ignorance of strategy is taken into consideration; the beneficial results to be expected far outweighed, moreover, the risk to be run. This telegram would indeed appear to have been the first definite blow struck by Germany against the British Empire. The part played by so-called neutral Germans in South Africa in the Boer war is well known. The part played by the German Press in Germany is also well known. The German Press is disciplined, so also is the German, wherever he may be, for he has, in most cases, been a soldier, and has been taught patriotism. The action of the German Press and of the German individual in South Africa is significant. There are other features in German policy of late years which tend to show that the foregoing is not mere idle speculation, but

is fair inference as to future objects, drawn from Germany's actual actions. The ascendency she was shown to have gained in Turkey in the Turco-Greek war, and the bearing such an ascendency would have in a war between Great Britain and Germany, is in itself sufficient to give ample room for serious thought.

It must not be forgotten that the Suez Canal and Egypt form one of the great arteries of the British empire, and that any nation that would prepare for war with Great Britain on scientific principles would endeavour to obtain ascendency in Turkey, with a view to enlisting the active co-operation of the Turks. As has already been said, the Sultan of Turkey is the head of the Mohammedan races, and as such would be a powerful ally to any nation which would enter the lists against the British Empire. There can surely be no question but that the Egyptians would, in the event of war between Great Britain and Turkey with an ally, do their best to throw off the British yoke, even though such a course might entail the renewed domination of their co-religionists, the Turks. But it is the case that Turkey would not venture to declare against Great Britain, unless assured of the neutrality of both Bulgaria and Russia. With such an assurance, however, she would have nothing to fear from Great Britain, for the British nation has at present no army with which to strike with any hope of success against the Turkish army. Thus any nation which would obtain the assistance of Turkey

against Great Britain, would, of necessity, do its utmost to obtain a guarantee of neutrality from Russia. Russia is the big dog in the East, and her benevolent neutrality would ensure the neutrality of Bulgaria. But more than this, were Germany the aggressive Power, she would, for the following reasons, do her utmost to obtain not only the benevolent neutrality of Russia, but armed co-operation :—

1. The Russian Black Sea fleet, strengthened in torpedo craft, based on Sevastopol, and with free egress through the Dardanelles, would strike with considerable effect and comparative security at British commerce in the Eastern Mediterranean, and would force Great Britain to detach a powerful fleet for its defence.*

2. The German fleet, reinforced by the Russian Baltic fleet, and holding the strategic advantage of the Kiel canal, would be in a position to contend with a fair prospect of success for the command of the North Sea. Great Britain's intention to blockade her adversary's fleets on the outbreak of war is well known; were she to adventure this with an inadequate force she would stand fair prospect of defeat.

3. An alliance between Russia and Germany would

* The Russian Black Sea fleet would endeavour, by its energy and success at the commencement of the war, to draw an undue proportion of the British naval forces away from the decisive point, the North Sea. The clamour of British firms interested in the Eastern trade, and the consequent terror displayed by the British Government in power may well be imagined. An attempt on the part of a British fleet to force the passage of the Dardanelles might well result in disaster.

practically be an alliance between the Dual and Triple Alliance; France would, perforce, except in a certain eventuality, remain neutral.

If, therefore, Germany were preparing for war with Great Britain she would endeavour to obtain the assistance of Russia, and to induce the latter country secretly to strengthen her fleet.

She would also endeavour to smooth over difficulties with France in order to ensure, in every eventuality, the neutrality of that country.

The most probable allies that Great Britain would seek to obtain in a war with Germany would be the United States, France, and Italy. The efforts of Germany would consequently be directed to depriving Great Britain of the assistance of these nations.

The late action of Germany in Venezuela was calculated to embroil Great Britain either with the United States or with Italy; for if Great Britain disavowed Germany's action, Italy, which was allied with Great Britain and Germany in the matter, might be brought to take offence; while, if she supported Germany's action, the United States, which regards any action of Great Britain in South America, and especially in Venezuela, with extreme jealousy, would almost certainly take offence.

It is true that in this instance Germany accepted the risk of giving offence to the United States herself; but it is Great Britain more than Germany which is regarded with jealousy in America. Risk must, moreover, be accepted in peace strategy as in war

strategy; and in this instance the risk was small, while the possible advantages to be gained were great.

There can be but little doubt that Germany is preparing for war with Great Britain. Absolute certainty can never be obtained until after the outbreak of war. A nation must, even as a general in the field, act on probabilities; it must not await certain information which will in all probability not be forthcoming until too late. British statesmen refused to recognise the probability of war against the Boers, notwithstanding the fact that it was

* Germany's late action directed against Canada was a cynical and hardly disguised attempt to force the British colonies apart from the mother country.

If Great Britain fails to support Canada in this matter the disruption of the British Empire is a foregone conclusion, and Great Britain need by no means expect assistance from her colonies in the event of war. But Great Britain can only support Canada after protracted discussion and consequent delay; for her peace strategy is not in the hands of one man in a position to act secretly and rapidly on its own initiative, as is the case with Continental Powers, but is directed by public opinion which is untrained in strategy. Canada and the other colonies will, however, very rightly brook no delay in this matter. They in the Boer war came nobly to the assistance of Great Britain; they have the right to demand that Great Britain shall come to theirs. Germany's move would appear to have been another master-stroke of peace strategy which, it would seem, must in all circumstances tell in favour of Germany; no risk has been run, for Great Britain ever fears to retaliate in aught save words, and the very greatest advantages, the disruption of the British Empire may well result. It is probable that if Germany attain her object, and can obtain the assistance of Russia, she will strike at once, before Great Britain can re-organise her system of leadership and her armed forces.

clearly patent to all from the time of the Jameson Raid; with the result that the British nation lacked definite object, lacked peace strategy, lacked preparation for war, and, so far as can be seen, lacked plan of operations worthy of the name. A similar lack of foresight against a nation in arms such as Germany, a trained pugilist, will ensure defeat.

Great Britain must act on probabilities; it is the only sound strategy.

* * * * * *

The test which strained the British army machine and the British Empire to breaking point in the Boer war will be as nothing to the test which may at any time be applied by a nation or nations with resources infinitely greater than the Boers, equal to or possibly greater than those of Great Britain, and without any of the fatal imperfections under which the Boers laboured and ultimately succumbed.

There are four great and several small nations in Europe, nations in arms, armed to the teeth, prepared at every point for a life-and-death struggle.

It is fear, and fear alone, that prevents each one attacking his neighbour. Hence we see antagonistic combinations between these nations, three on the one side and two on the other. Each combination fears the other. Each combination has endeavoured to obtain the assistance of Great Britain, not out of love for her, but from motives of self-interest. Jealousy has up to the present kept them apart; and jealousy may be expected to keep them apart

until a common interest arises which necessitates combined action.

Great Britain and the British Empire, with its enormous wealth, which, it may be, can easily be filched, will form the common interest; and the fact is but now being recognised by Continental Powers. Each combination has viewed the Boer war with interest, and has seen, not altogether with astonishment, that Great Britain, unable to grasp, through ignorance, the nature of the crisis, was equally unable to deal with it in the manner in which it should have been dealt with—in the manner in which a great trained nation would have dealt with a similar one. Each combination, recognising that Great Britain, the heart of the British Empire, is unable to prepare for or to conduct war on scientific principles, is narrowly watching and weighing the value of the newly formed British Empire.

Is this Empire a great factor in the world, or is it a gigantic fraud, which will be exposed when put to a scientific test?

Is the British Empire preparing for war, or is it unprepared and likely to remain so?

The British Empire is at present an unknown quantity, but a few years' close study will disclose its value.

Let us try to see ourselves as others will see us.

The result of the Boer war has up to the present been an unlimited amount of discussion and an expressed determination to reorganise the army.

In place of universal service, which is an obvious necessity, the nation has been content with the hopeless effort to carry through and extend its system of volunteering with all its great radical defects. A hopeless system, inasmuch as it is too expensive a system with which to meet a real war against a trained nation; for, and this fact must not be forgotten, British irregulars charge according to their market value. In the Boer war this market value was five shillings a day, and in exceptional cases as much as ten shillings or even fifteen shillings a day per head. In a real war, when the British Empire would be forced to put millions of men into the field in place of hundreds of thousands, the market value of soldiers will increase to two, three, or five pounds a day; the resources of the Empire will break down, and the Empire will be forced in the midst of the struggle to adopt universal service, even as she in the Boer war was forced to adopt the system of the employment of unorganised volunteers beyond the seas. In such a case her attempt at sudden organisation would be a makeshift and a mere pretence at the real thing, even as it was in the Boer war.

Improvised organisation, which may succeed against the Boers, will fail against a great modern-trained Power, and will be doomed from the commencement against a combination of such Powers. Assume, for example, that war broke out between Great Britain and Germany or France—it matters not which. Assume that the British Colonies, including South Africa,

rally round Great Britain. The British Empire would be unable to strike her adversary, having no weapon with which to strike. Command of the sea would certainly enable her to transport an army across the sea with which to strike, but she has no army as armies count in these days. The Empire would at the outset of the struggle be thrown on the defensive, giving the initiative to her adversary. History tells us that inevitable defeat is the meed of a continued defensive. If the Empire would win, she must sooner or later organise an army with which to strike. Such an army would entail universal service of the manhood of the Empire.

And now the other side. The adversary has the weapon ready with which to strike. It needs only the power to convey that weapon across the sea—the command of the sea. The adversary has a fleet with which to struggle for the command of the sea. Such a struggle would be the first phase of the war, and it would depend on this struggle whether—

1. The adversary could utilise his offensive weapon, the army, and strike a certain death-blow at the British Empire; or,

2. The Empire would gain time in which to establish universal service as a preliminary to striking her adversary. The adversary, a nation of soldiers, with thoughts given to war and the study of it, has assuredly recognised the fact that its hopes of success are based entirely upon the initial struggle for the command of the sea. Sentiment in such a case would

not be permitted to interfere with strategy. The war would be deliberately prepared and deliberately engineered, and the outbreak would be entirely unexpected throughout the British Empire.

Strategy, secrecy, and surprise would be the main factors on which the adversary would base his hope of success; and it is probable that the first blow would precede, or at least be simultaneous with, a declaration of war.

With any other nation allied to Germany, the balance of material strength at sea would be about equal. With Germany's capacity for, and knowledge of, peace strategy and war preparation; with her appreciation of the advantages given by readiness over an unprepared adversary; with her power of disguising her intentions as compared with the absence of all definite plan on the part of Great Britain, and the inability to keep such plan secret, even if it existed; with her single directing brain, as compared with the numerous and ignorant directing brains in Great Britain; with her constant study of war, as compared with the perfunctory study of war in Great Britain; with her faultless strategy, as exemplified in 1866 and 1870, as compared with Great Britain's strategy, as exemplified in the Boer war;—with all this thrown into the scale, the balance would be so greatly in favour of Germany as to render the defeat of Great Britain almost inevitable.

A war between Germany alone and the British Empire would indeed to-day be by no means the

one-sided affair it is usually considered in Great Britain. A few more years of preparation on the part of Germany will, however, most certainly render it one-sided. Great Britain and the British Empire are, indeed, already face to face in the struggle for existence with the German Empire; and war has, to all intents and purposes, already commenced.

CHAPTER XV

THE PROBLEM OF THE EMPIRE—AN EMPIRE SYSTEM

APOLOGISTS for the present British army system have explained that it is impossible for Great Britain to maintain an efficiently organised army owing to the great difficulties which stand in the way of so desirable an institution; and that the problems to be solved by continental nations are simple compared with those to be solved by Great Britain.

Difficulties are made to be overcome; but no difficulties can be overcome when the methods employed are based upon a radical misapprehension.

In all matters connected with the national armaments the cry has been: Defence, defence; always defence. It is the "Defence" of India; the "Defence" of London; but never the defeat of the enemy. Mere defence never yet won a battle, whether such battle was fought between man and man, army and army, or nation and nation.

British prize-fighters won their battles not by

defending themselves, but by striking their adversaries.

Salamanca, a defensive battle, was won by a counter-stroke; Waterloo, a defensive battle, was won by a counter-stroke; Austerlitz, a defensive battle, was won by a counter-stroke.

Napoleon, the great master of war, defended himself by striking blow upon blow. The essence of Stonewall Jackson's defence was a constant succession of blows. Richmond, the Southern capital, was defended by a great counter-stroke. Hamilcar and his son Hannibal, the Carthaginians having been beaten to their knees, recognised that the offensive and the offensive alone could save their country. Lacking the command of the sea, Hannibal yet struck at his adversary by passing through Spain, over the Pyrenees, over the Alps, and through the length of Italy to reach his enemy's heart.

The Boers failed to win a decisive victory at Magersfontein through their inability to strike a blow, due to lack of training, of leaders, and of discipline. It is the offensive, and the offensive alone, which wins.

The navy is the defensive arm; the army is the offensive arm.

That nation which is content to maintain a navy of strength believed to be sufficient to hold the seas against all possible opponents, without an army with which to strike back, is content to remain on the passive defensive, and is foredoomed to defeat.

For pure defence will always, sooner or later, be overcome by a bold offensive. Armour, no matter how excellent the workmanship, will always have its weak spots—its joints; and provided the assailant has time in which to seek for those weak spots, he will sooner or later find them. A knight of olden time, having got his enemy down, sought for a weak spot through which he might thrust his dagger, and found it.

Natural obstacles, such as rivers, mountains, deserts, or seas, have never yet in the world's history stopped a determined assailant; and neither will mere armour forged by human agency, even though that armour be a great navy.

It is the offensive—the blow that strikes the enemy to the earth—that alone wins wars.

Great Britain depends for her security on the natural obstacle, the sea, combined with her defensive armour, the navy. The sea, as an obstacle, has lost half, or rather more than half, its difficulties since the introduction of steam. Eliminate the navy, and the invasion of Great Britain by either France or Germany would at any moment be but a simple operation. The British Empire depends, therefore, in reality, for her existence, though the fact is not popularly known, entirely on her powerful navy. Fleets at sea, equally with armies on land, are liable to be directed by faulty strategy. Faulty strategy, whether on sea or land, brings defeat in its train. Great Britain's security depends on sound

strategy; and sound strategy is impossible to nations governed like Great Britain or the British Empire.

Great Britain, like a tortoise encased in her armour—her command of the sea—considers herself secure. South Africa has taught her that there may be joints in her armour; of which she now has reason to believe South Africa to be one.

Are there no other joints?

The British Empire consists of a heart—Great Britain—and four limbs—Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.* The heart is joined to the limbs by the sea, the command of which is the armour of the British Empire. There are three lines of communication between the heart and the limbs, which, in each case, pass overland, and are vulnerable to the attack of outside Powers.†

These are:—

1. The line through Egypt.
2. The line through South Africa.
3. The line through Canada.

If the Empire lose command of the sea her defensive armour as a whole collapses. The loss of Egypt and the Suez Canal would to-day probably entail the break-up of the Empire. The permanent loss of either South Africa or Canada would obviously entail the immediate disintegration and ruin of the Empire.

* India is a dependency which is held by the sword, as is Egypt.

† South Africa is no longer liable to outside attack, but is, on the other hand, liable to rebellion on a large scale.

Egypt, South Africa, and Canada are joints in the armour; and may be compared to arteries of the Empire, the permanent severance of any one of which will entail death, and the temporary severance of any two of which will, as it were, entail a loss of life-blood from which the Empire will with difficulty recover.

An enemy without a fleet of sufficient strength to compete for the command of the sea with Great Britain, might yet defeat Great Britain by blows struck indirectly, that is, with the assistance of other nations, at these arteries of the British Empire.

The South African artery is temporarily severed, and it is still doubtful whether this severance is merely temporary or will become permanent. The Empire is at present engaged in a process of healing which is entirely novel. It is an experiment; it may heal the wound, it may not; the process is at the least less troublesome than the known method of cure. The known method is to apply ligatures, to bandage the wound, and, ultimately, when it is cured, to remove the bandage. In other words, to occupy South Africa with a powerful army of occupation; to keep our enemies in subjection; to suppress freedom of disloyal speech and of the disloyal Press; to train the rising generation in the way in which it should go; and ultimately, after some two or three generations, to relax the grip. The present experiment consists in permitting the blood to flow freely in the hope that the artery will cure itself. It is

a simple cure, and saves both trouble and money; and, moreover, obviates the necessity of universal service.

An effort has been made to thrust a dagger through the South African joint; and whether the attempt has succeeded or has failed has yet to be proved.

The next attempt to pierce through a joint will in all probability be combined with an attempt to break up the whole defensive armour of the Empire by a struggle for the command of the sea. Such a struggle would be sharp, short, and decisive. For if Great Britain won the initial moves her resources in shipbuilding would probably render her secure. If, on the other hand, she lost these initial moves, her supremacy at sea would be gone for ever; for the British navy is entirely centralised in Great Britain—she has no arsenals elsewhere—and an invasion of Great Britain would instantly follow her defeat at sea.

The power of prolonged resistance is obtained by decentralisation alone. A great navy of the Empire with its bases, *i.e.*, arsenals, in every quarter of the globe could struggle indefinitely for the command of the sea.

The problem to be solved by the newly formed British Empire is:—

How is the Empire to maintain its place amongst the leading nations of the earth?

The Empire cannot remain stationary; its movement must either be forward or retrograde. The purely defensive spells defeat or a retrograde move-

ment: the offensive alone can carry the Empire forward.

The pettiest of trifles may at any moment involve the British Empire in a great war for existence with possibly two, three, or even four great modern military nations; assisted, it may well be, by the Boers in South Africa, the Mohammedans in Egypt and in India, by disloyalty in Great Britain and by rebellion in Ireland. The Boer war, indeed, clearly demonstrated that the British Empire stood alone against the world, with the exception, it may be, of the United States, and that the loyalty in the British Islands themselves was not all that it should have been. These facts ought, indeed, to have been sufficiently patent many years before.

The problem of the British Empire is:—

How is the British Empire to triumph over the world? Success in commerce springs from success in war; overmuch attention to commerce brings defeat in its train. It is into the lap of that nation which gives its thoughts to war, and which knows how to triumph in war, that Fortune throws of her best.

How shall the British Empire triumph over the world in arms?

The problem before the British Empire comes back to the first great principle of nature, how to triumph in war?

Triumph in war can only be gained by great offensive strokes, delivered, in modern days, by the whole

manhood of a nation, backed by perfect national discipline, and directed by faultless strategy.

The successful delivery of such strokes depends upon careful preparation through years of peace, based upon a definite strategical plan of operations. It is this basis, this definite plan of offensive operations, which is, as it were, the foundation-stone of the edifice of preparation. It, in its turn, must be based upon some great immutable principle, or it must be faulty in conception, liable to constant modifications with all their resulting changes, makeshifts, and consequent inefficiencies throughout the edifice. A plan of operations is impossible to the purely defensive; for defence must dance while offence pipes. The defence will always be forced to discard any plan of operations it may have formed, and must seek to prevent the execution of the plan of the assailant; or it must endeavour to seize the initiative, that is, assume the offensive. This immutable principle would therefore appear to be—the offensive alone can win; defence is doomed to defeat.

Taking this principle as a basis, let us examine into the means the British Empire must adopt if it would win success.

The Empire is at present a conglomeration of four nations, bound together by similarity of language and the ties of blood-relationship alone. It is to be hoped that they will shortly be bound together by commercial ties, when the strategically false principle of Free

Trade has disappeared.* The true bond, that of brotherhood in arms, is, however, wanting.

A certain portion of Great Britain itself is disloyal to the Empire; and though this disloyalty finds ex-

* Since this was written the question of Free Trade has taken a foremost position in the thoughts of Englishmen. That the principle of Free Trade is strategically faulty is clear from the following extract from a letter written by Mr. Cobden in 1842:—

"It has struck me that it would be as well to try and engraft our Free Trade agitation upon the peace movement. They are one and the same cause. It has often been to me a matter of the greatest surprise that the Friends have not taken up the question of Free Trade as the means—and I believe the only means—of effecting universal and permanent peace. The efforts of the peace societies, however laudable, can never be successful so long as the nations maintain their present system of isolation. The colonial system, with all its dazzling appeals to the passions of the people, can never be got rid of except by the indirect process of Free Trade, which will gradually and imperceptibly loose the bonds which unite our colonies to us by a mistaken notion of self-interest. Yet the colonial policy of Europe has been the chief source of wars for the last hundred and fifty years. Again, Free Trade, by perfecting the intercourse and securing the dependence of countries one upon another, must inevitably snatch the power from the Governments to plunge their people into wars."—"Life of Richard Cobden," by John Morley, p. 32.

It is unfortunately the case that Free Trade in Great Britain will not snatch the power of making war from the Governments of other countries; while it does loose the bonds which bind the colonies to the mother country, and will, if persisted in, leave Great Britain isolated, and without the assistance of even her colonies, to face her numerous enemies single-handed. Universal peace is possible only with universal fear. The result of Free Trade, in Mr. Cobden's own words, must be to render Great Britain powerless for good or evil. Strategy inexorably demands the employment of all available force, and of every source of strength, against the adversary. Free Trade is clearly faulty strategy, inasmuch as its renders impossible the first step in preparation for the forthcoming war, which is the consolidation of the Empire.

pression, principally, through men actuated by political motives, and probably, or, indeed, almost certainly, by self-interest, yet it undoubtedly exists. Dormant though it may be, it is yet a distinct and growing source of danger to the Empire. Success can only be attained, provided all portions of the Empire are actuated by the one great motive of patriotism, and by a single-minded determination to uphold the integrity of the Empire, under all circumstances and against all comers. The first and most obvious object of all those who have the interests of the Empire at heart must be—and this must, surely, be clear to all—to suppress expressed disloyalty, and to cause the south of Ireland to become an integral portion of the Empire, animated by that same sense of patriotism as fills the hearts of the majority of the race.

The great majority holds the power; the disloyal minority are at present powerless. The present is the time for the majority to suppress the minority; for disloyalty, like other diseases, increases in virulence if granted latitude; and what may now be but a small matter will, if disregarded, in the near future attain gigantic proportions. Enemies of the country, whether in peace or war, should be regarded as enemies of the country, and dealt with accordingly. Such action is in no sense an infringement of the principle of freedom; it is but an obvious precaution on the part of those who would retain their freedom rather than become subjects of a foreign Power.

In addition to this disloyalty in Ireland, one of the four nations of the Empire is but now in process of being absorbed; and it is still doubtful whether, in the next crisis through which the Empire passes, that nation will be friend or foe.

The assimilation of South Africa is no more a complicated problem than is the suppression of rebellion in Ireland. The sole difficulty lies in bringing an uneducated nation governed by sentiment and a popular Government to grasp the necessity for action.

A whole race, related to the Empire in blood, but distinct from it in language, in tradition, and in religion, must be brought to form an integral part of the Empire. No more loyal man than the Irish soldier exists; he has fought side by side with other men of the race, and knows their worth, even as they know his. He is proof against the wiles of the pedagogue and the politician.

A brotherhood in arms, the great bond which establishes fast friendship between nation and nation as between man and man, will alone bind South Africa to the remainder of the Empire, as it will alone bring to a termination the intrigue and covert rebellion in the south of Ireland.

The young Africander nation has, through bitter adversity, learnt the knowledge of war. It has stretched its muscles; and, even though these muscles have not pulled together, but have pulled one against the other, has felt, and will shortly know its own strength.

It has felt the burning excitement of war. The war-fever is now in its blood; and, while its manhood asts, that war-fever will last—aye, and more, will inevitably drive the nation to war.

Let the Empire ensure that that war-lust be directed against the enemies of the Empire, and not against the Empire itself.

The Boers, a young nation in arms, brought up in the principle that it is the duty of every man to fight for his country; and, regarding the absence of such a liability not as a sign of freedom, but as a neglect of an obvious duty, gives no difficulty in the way of universal service.

Canada and Natal have, to a certain extent, adopted the principle. Australia and New Zealand, being young and vigorous, would quickly understand the necessity. India must be held by the sword until the end. It is the old mother country, Great Britain, with her centuries of prejudice and ignorance, which alone cannot recognise the one great principle of self-defence and success. It is by universal service, whether as soldier or sailor, throughout the Empire; by the introduction of national discipline throughout the race; by the constant study of war on the part of the whole manhood of the Empire, and by the adoption of a manly form of government, that the problems of South Africa and Ireland can alone be solved.

It is only, moreover, by the adoption of universal service and its form of government that the Empire

can hope to raise the force necessary to cope with its probable enemies.*

The consolidation of the Empire is thus undoubtedly the first necessity, but such consolidation can only be effected by the bond of a brotherhood in arms, by deliberate preparation for war, and by the introduction of national self-restraint and discipline..

Success in a war in which the whole Empire has taken part, will more surely bind together the Empire in one homogeneous whole, than will centuries of peace.

The offensive alone can win. The Empire's preparation for war, must, it would seem, be based upon an offensive plan of operations. The duty of the navy is to hold the seas, the communications of the Empire, the loss of which must convert an united whole into a number of disconnected parts, without cohesion—an appreciable force into a thing of no importance.

It is also the duty of the navy to ensure the safe transport of the land forces of the Empire to the heart of the enemy in order that the decisive blows may be struck.

Colonel Henderson writes:—

"Half-hearted strategy which aims only at repulsing the enemy's attack is not the path to 'King-making

* If the colonies refuse to adopt universal service, it is one more reason why it should be forthwith introduced into Great Britain. But there is no reason to suppose that the colonies would refuse if Great Britain led the way.

victory'; it is not by such feeble means that States secure or protect their independence."

A navy without an army is half-hearted; it is strategy which aims only at repulsing the enemy's attack. Decisive blows can be struck by a great army alone, and such an army can only be produced provided all nations of the Empire subscribe to the utmost of their capacity, that is, with their whole manhood.

But to strike at a modern military nation would, it will be said, require upwards of a million or two million men, possibly more. It is true, and the necessity must be faced. It is in any case no more than other nations are prepared to do to safeguard their freedom, and there would appear to be no special reason why the British race should not do as much.

The knowledge that in the event of war the British Empire, if successful in the preliminary struggle for the command of the sea, would strike with her whole manhood at an enemy, would of itself in every eventuality ensure powerful allies. With the certain support of five hundred thousand to a million men, France would not hesitate to join the British Empire, if need be, against both Germany and Russia; but in such an event Germany would not venture even with the assistance of Russia; for, with Great Britain and France as enemies, she would assuredly be invaded before the arrival of the Russian forces, and her territory would thus form the battle-ground of the armies of Europe. Thus if universal service

were adopted in Great Britain, Germany would only venture to attack the former provided she could either obtain the assistance of the United States, or execute her project single-handed. It is unsafe for any nation to count on assistance, and every nation in modern times would do well to trust to its own power to attack and defeat its enemy unaided.

Universal service with a view to a passive defence would be useless, for such a course would not prevent Germany alone, or with the assistance of Russia and Turkey, attacking Great Britain in the almost certain hope of forcing her to submission through loss in commerce and trade. It is fear of invasion alone that will cause Germany to refrain from attacking Great Britain, and it will equally be fear of invasion that will alone, in the end, prevent Russia attacking India. Universal service, if adopted throughout the Empire, must be introduced with the definite object of the invasion of an enemy's territory, be that enemy who it may.

If, then, the British Empire were about to invade the territory of her adversary, say in Europe, with an army of one or, possibly, two million men—and such is no exaggeration in numbers if the Empire would defeat a modern military power—the preliminary concentration of troops drawn from all parts of the Empire must have place in British territory, it may be in Egypt, it may be in Great Britain, it would probably be in both; or, it may be, in the

territory of an ally. In any case the movements of large masses of men can only be conducted by a fully organised and qualified staff, with the assistance of trained and highly educated regimental officers. Soldiers can be improvised; efficient officers cannot be improvised, but require many years of training. An efficient staff requires not only the training of the regimental officer, but a special training in addition. A staff, to be efficient, must be organised and trained in peace-time. For an army of the size that must be employed by the Empire, peace organisation and training are not merely desirable but are necessities.

An army of such a size cannot be improvised as was the comparatively small British army of the Boer war. Each nation of the Empire must bear its share of the burden, if burden it can rightly be called, and must, if success would be gained, be prepared to operate in any portion of the globe.

Decentralisation of the British army amongst the colonies is a necessity, and yet for the efficient conduct of peace strategy and preparation for war one central and undivided control is necessary.

And so similarly with the navy.

The British navy, though of sufficient power to guard the interests of Great Britain alone, is all insufficient for the enlarged interests of the Empire.

The navy has in the past proved itself of strength sufficient to ensure the safe transport of the petty British armies which, from time to time, have been landed in foreign countries; it would, however, be

entirely inadequate to secure, at the same time, the seas of the world for the transport of armies from all the nations of the Empire, even though it had practically disposed of the adverse navy.

The navy, equally with the army, should be decentralised; and each nation of the Empire must bear its share of the burden. Similarly with the army, however, if the Empire would prepare its naval forces for war, and would ensure the proper conduct of actual operations, one central and undivided control of the navy is requisite.

The navy and the army are, as it were, the right and the left arms of the Empire. The man whose right hand knew not what his left hand was doing would have made but a poor pugilist. The right arm and the left arm should be directed by one brain, or failure is inevitable.

At present, in the British Empire, the direction of the peace strategy, of the preparation for war, and of the conduct of war, stands thus:—

The so-called Commander-in-Chief of the army is a Commander-in-Chief in name only. He has no power to interfere in any one of the above questions.

The Secretary of State for War is the virtual Commander-in-Chief; he, however, has no control over the navy, or in questions of peace strategy, save as a member of the Cabinet, and cannot, therefore, be in a position to direct either the preparation for war or the actual conduct of operations. He is, moreover, a civilian.

The navy is controlled by a Board. This Board has no control over the army, or over matters of peace strategy. The Board of the Admiralty is not in a position to direct either the preparation for or the conduct of war. It is, moreover, partly composed of civilians.

The Foreign Office is responsible for the peace strategy of the nation, but, marvellous to relate, did not control the peace strategy in connection with South Africa, which was, and is, under the Colonial Office. It has, moreover, no control over the War Office or Admiralty, and has, therefore, no power in the matter of preparation for or the conduct of war.

The Colonial and Home Offices are also, both, to a large extent, responsible for the peace strategy of the nation.

The Cabinet controls the War Office, Admiralty, Foreign, Home, and Colonial Offices. No single member of the Cabinet is either a soldier or a sailor. The Cabinet is, moreover, controlled by "Public Opinion."

Anglo-Saxon nations have raised up unto themselves a god which they term "Public Opinion"; the "opinion," if it can so be called, of the populace.

Carlyle stigmatised the populace as mostly fools. Shakespeare terms it the rabble and other opprobrious epithets. Virgil calls it the "many-headed." Bismarck called it *Monsieur le Pavé.* It is the public opinion of the Empire which is responsible for the peace strategy of the nation, preparation for

war, and the actual conduct of operations. A Council of War on a magnificent scale.

The only means by which the Empire can hope to succeed in war, or even to exist, is by the introduction of a revolution in its form of government and in its military systems. Half-hearted measures will be, as they always have been and indeed must be, useless. Unless the nation can trust a soldier or sailor with the untrammelled direction of peace strategy, preparation for war, and of the conduct of war, it cannot hope for success.* †

* * * * * *

* Mr. Balfour, speaking at Liverpool (*Times*, February 14th, 1903), stated that the "Committee of Defence" had lately been improved:—"We have placed upon it not merely the President of the Council and the Prime Minister, the First Lord of the Admiralty, and the Secretary of State for War, all members of the Cabinet; but we have added to them as permanent elements the Commander-in-Chief, the First Naval Lord, the Director of Military Intelligence, and the Director of Naval Intelligence." That the inclusion of military men in a "Committee of Defence" is a correct measure might have been clear to all some few years ago; the point for consideration is whether the exclusion of civilians is not desirable; but the fact still remains that this Committee, a Council of War, is subordinate to that other Council of War, composed entirely of civilians, the Cabinet.

† The War Commission has now, of course, made clear to all that the system, or rather absence of leadership, of the British nation was entirely responsible for Great Britain's failures in South Africa. The immediate result is an outcry of public opinion against the present Government. But there is no reason to suppose that any party Government, whether it be Conservative, Liberal, or Radical, would have done better. Leadership, scientific or otherwise, is impossible to any party Government.

An Empire System.

Defeat spells ruin to Great Britain; and it means ruin equally, it would seem, to the colonies. For Canada without the support of the British nation would quickly, it is probable, be made the victim of the first unscrupulous American politician whose precarious position might necessitate an outside war. Any such war must, it is clear, when the strength and resources of the two nations is considered, take place ultimately in Canada. It is probably the fact that Canada would be forced to fight for her existence within a few months of the defeat of Great Britain. South Africa, in spite of her enormous potentialities, is too weak to stand alone, and is too rich to be left alone. Without the power of Great Britain behind her back she would form the battle-ground both for internecine conflicts and for European invaders. And neither is it probable that Australia and New Zealand would be left without the unpleasant attentions of both European and Asiatic Powers.

It would indeed seem that the defeat of Great Britain must be the precursor of a cataclysm amongst nations in which the life of no small nation would be safe. It may, however, be that the fall of Great Britain would entail but small consequences, other than those purely commercial, on the colonies; and that these colonies would be granted time in which to attain full growth. Even

if such were the case they would, for many years to come, so far as man can see, be but petty nations amongst the great ones of the earth, browbeaten on every hand and liable to attack on all sides.

Such a possible existence is in somewhat startling contrast to that other and fuller existence as part of an armed British Empire, which should dominate the world. There can be no doubt but that policy equally with sentiment will, in the case of each colony, not even excepting South Africa, be best served by a close offensive and defensive confederation of the nations of the Empire.

The British Empire stands face to face with the world in arms; and if she would exist her armaments must be increased to such an extent as will enable her to contend, if necessary, with the whole world.

The navy must, it is clear, be prepared to hold the seas, not against any two nations, but against the fleets of the world.

The army must similarly be prepared, not to defend Great Britain or to defend Canada, or to defend India, or to squash a tribe of savages here or of farmers there, but to strike at the heart of its adversary, be that adversary who it may.

In organising the armed forces of the Empire, decentralisation, under one supreme head, is essential. Each nation should, it must be obvious, maintain its own armed forces, both army and

navy, organised on similar lines throughout the Empire. Without simplicity in organisation, large forces, whether on sea or land, can neither be rapidly mobilised nor properly manœuvred and directed. Let us endeavour to grasp the magnitude of the operations, if the Empire finds herself at any time pitted against one or a combination of modern military nations; for unless this point be made clear the necessity of simplicity and uniformity in organisation can hardly be apparent. Let us assume that war between a combination of such powers and the Empire is imminent; and let us, moreover, assume that the Empire has been organised as a fighting machine.

The fleets of the Empire, leaving such small detachments as would be unavoidably necessary, would be concentrated with a view to the initial struggle for the command of the sea; and this struggle, if won by the Empire, would, of necessity, be followed by the mobilisation of the armies of the Empire, preliminary to the strategical concentration for a blow at the heart of the adversary. When it is remembered that the Russian army numbers approximately some four million to five million men, and the German and French armies some three million to four million men each, and the Turkish army some one million to two million men, the magnitude of the task which the Empire may at any moment be forced to undertake will be apparent. The directing head of military operations must, if he

would wield with success the forces of the Empire, have a complete knowledge of the numbers and resources, in men and ships, of the enemy as of the Empire, and of possible allies or enemies; while he must also have the strategical problem clearly mapped out in his mind, the moves he intends to make, the probable and possible counter-moves of the enemy, together with the course he may be forced by circumstances to adopt, with the necessary alterations from his original plan. Any radical alteration in any plan, unavoidably entails numerous alterations in the detailed working, and a complicated system renders the difficulties in the way of sudden alteration insuperable. Material strength is of but little avail if directed by faulty strategy. It is the directing brain, the brain of the leader who impresses his personality on his own troops, who can diffuse his own energy and determination through all ranks, who knows how to upset the mental equilibrium of his opponent, with the consequent demoralisation throughout the adversary's forces, which wins success. Such men are a combination, as Colonel Henderson tells us, of certain inborn qualities, supplemented by years of study and hard work. Nations can but seldom produce such men. There is the man who, having great qualities, has neglected to supplement those qualities by hard study; and, consequently, lacks the knowledge without which success cannot be hoped for; and there is he who, having given his life to study, must yet meet failure from the

absence of some inborn quality, whether of determination, pluck, decision, fortitude, to which he has failed to train himself. It is given to few nations to produce a great statesman or general at the psychological moment. It should be the object of a nation, not only to train leaders, but to organise and train its armed forces on so perfect and yet simple a system as will enable mediocrity to triumph.

War in the future must more than ever be a duel between the two directing brains of the opponents; for good strategy will concentrate such overwhelming force at the decisive point as will overbear all resistance. A single directing head is essential to the proper conduct of war; and the forces of the Empire, however powerful in material strength, could hardly hope for success unless the peace strategy, the preparation for war, and especially the actual conduct of operations be directed by one supreme head with absolute powers in these matters. And this supreme head must be one whose position places him far above considerations of petty party strife, far above petty jealousies, able to do his duty honestly to the nation without fear of removal in case of unpopularity; in one word, the King.

The King, and the King alone, holds such a position as should be held by the Commander-in-Chief of the forces of the Empire.

In 1866 and 1870 the King of Prussia, a soldier, was Commander-in-Chief. He, and he alone, took the responsibility for plunging the nation into war,

and for success or failure. A vast responsibility, and one which must be borne, if success would be attained, by one man alone. But it should be noted that the King was not called upon to do more than accept responsibility; for his three advisers, all soldiers, each one an autocrat in his own department, held the power to practically decide questions of vital importance.

Such would appear to be the simplest and truest form of organisation; and we have at least an example of brilliant successes attained both in peace and war by the nation which adopts it.

It is too much to expect of the British race that it should make matters of internal administration in any way subject to the will of an autocrat, and it is unnecessary; but is it too much to expect that it should do so in the case of its peace strategy, its preparation for and actual conduct of war? Any other course must spell defeat.

It should be noted, moreover, that the Germans had and have their party politics; but that these are confined to petty questions of internal administration, and that great matters on which the existence of the nation depends are withdrawn from their baneful influence. Party politics are, in fact, a pursuit for the old men and unemployed of a nation; they are not a subject on which men should waste time or exercise thought.

There would seem to be no true reason why the central control of the Empire should not be organised

on lines which, while they by no means remove self-government from the people yet bring success in war, the crisis which alone decides the fate of a nation, within reach. Such an organisation is, however, possible only to a nation educated in military matters; that is, one in which every man has been either soldier or sailor. It is, indeed, the form of government, a national military despotism, which it would seem must automatically come into existence, when universal service is adopted.

The question may well be asked, Why should the central control of the Empire be established in Great Britain rather than in one of the colonies? As has been shown, Great Britain is at present, owing to over-centralisation of the armed forces of the Empire, the heart, or most vulnerable point of the Empire. Properly speaking, this alone should be sufficient for strategical reasons for removing the central control elsewhere; for a successful blow delivered against Great Britain would entail the collapse of the central control, and the consequent dislocation of the whole system. Great Britain is, however, at present the head of the Empire; her colonies have not yet attained maturity. The strategical importance of Great Britain must, owing to her insular position off the shores of Europe, always be great so long as Europe is peopled by nations of great power whose conflicting interests are the governing factors in the world. While Europe, in fact, remains the home of vigorous nations, so long must Great Britain's position be one of great

strategical importance. The west of Europe—Germany, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, and Great Britain—is still, strategically and politically, the centre of the universe, though the American continent is daily rising into greater prominence. The British Empire stands or falls with Great Britain; and, while such is the case, the colonies would do wisely to hold the interests of Great Britain paramount, even though such interests may appear to conflict with their own; for British interests will, in the immediate future at least, be the national interest of the Empire, while the interests of the Colonies will in most cases be purely local, and consequently secondary interests. Great Britain is at present the decisive point of the Empire; and, even as the headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief of several armies in the field is moved as near as possible to the decisive point of operations, so should, apparently, the Commander-in-Chief of the Empire have his headquarters at the decisive point of the Empire. Canada is, however, an exception to the other colonies. The United States is daily rising into prominence as a great Power; and it may well be that in the near future the centre of interest —the decisive point—will be transferred from Great Britain to Canada. Until such time arrives, however, the central control of the armed forces should, it would appear, act from Great Britain.

It has been said that decentralisation is a necessity, and that each nation of the Empire should furnish its own armed forces.

The territorial system, so far as the land forces are concerned, is undoubtedly the only feasible system; each nation furnishing its own army, each district furnishing a certain number of army corps, according to the size of the population. And similarly, as regards the sea forces, a hydrographic organisation would probably be the simplest and best. Thus the oceans of the world would perforce be divided amongst the nations of the Empire, according to their power. Above all, should the construction of ships of war be decentralised, each nation establishing its own arsenals and constructing its own ships? Such decentralisation of the fleet is an absolute necessity, if supremacy at sea is desired; and it should be remembered that without supremacy at sea land forces are helpless, for they cannot strike.

Much discussion has at times arisen over the question of whether coaling stations are to be garrisoned by soldiers or marines. Such questions, in view of the vast problem before the Empire, are immaterial; they are details which should not even be considered until the main principles have been decided. The solution of the problem of the garrisoning of India and Egypt under universal service will of itself solve such petty questions of detail.

India and Egypt are tropical countries; they are not countries in which the British race can thrive and multiply. They are dependencies of the Empire, which must both be held by the sword.

The loss of India would be disastrous to the prestige of the Empire; the loss of Egypt would entail, so far as one can see, actual disintegration. It is, therefore, equally to the interest of all the nations of the Empire that India and Egypt should be efficiently garrisoned, and all nations should, therefore, bear their part of the burden; for burden it is—one of those burdens which are inseparable from greatness. Roughly speaking, India at present requires a permanent garrison of a hundred thousand British troops, while Egypt requires at present some ten thousand.

But with universal service throughout the Empire, the danger of attack from outside on these possessions would practically disappear, and the armies of occupation could be considerably reduced in numbers. France, moreover, gives us an example of the manner in which tropical countries may be held by a nation which has adopted universal service.

The British Empire, as a confederation of nations, is now but entering upon its life in the world's arena. It depends upon those nations themselves whether that life shall be long or short. National licence, with all the manifold evils which result, will sap the life of the nation; stern national discipline will lead the Empire to triumph over all enemies, and will indefinitely prolong the national existence.

The enormous resources of the Empire, combined with national discipline and readiness for war, will, it must be apparent, create the ruling Power of the

world—a Power which, with the assistance of the United States, will dictate terms to all. Into such a confederation the French and German nations must perforce, sooner or later, enter; and then, indeed, the day of peace throughout the world will be at hand. For such a confederation will take the place amongst nations of that law which prevents private individuals from killing each other.

In its later days the Roman Empire, fearing to further extend its boundaries, was content to remain on the defensive and to cease from further toil; and thenceforward slowly but surely sank.

A nation cannot remain stationary; it cannot say—Thus far have I gone, but no further will I go. Even though it have conquered the world, let it seek for other worlds to conquer.

Signs are everywhere apparent that the power of the Empire will shortly be put to the test by a combination of modern military nations. The result depends on the men of the British race; the fate of the Empire would seem to be in its own hands.

THE END.

Printed by Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ld., London and Aylesbury.

Digitized with financial assistance from
Shri Brihad Bhartiya Samaj
on 31 October, 2019